

St. John's Journal

Volume 50, Issue 3

LUTHERAN DISTINCTIVES

II. Lutherans carefully distinguish between God's messages of Law and Gospel. Part 3

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We take another look at Biblical teachings and practices that are distinctive of the Lutheran Church. Lutherans take great care in our teaching of God's Word, in part, because we recognize the danger of confusing Law and Gospel.

You remember that the Gospel is God's good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. The Law is God's message that commands and instructs us in what we should and should not do, and condemns our sin. These messages are confused when the Gospel is proclaimed as though it were primarily a means to obedience, or when the Law is proclaimed as a means to salvation. To say the same thing another way, Law and Gospel are confused when Jesus is proclaimed primarily as another lawgiver, and God's commandments are proclaimed as precepts man can obey to earn a place in heaven.

Great harm comes when people confuse Law and Gospel. The damaging effects can be summarized under two general headings. First, people will have a false trust in their own goodness for salvation. Simply put, if someone thinks he can get to heaven by obeying God's Law, he has a false trust in himself. God tells us, "No one will be justified in His sight by works of the law." *Romans 3:20* (It would also be helpful to read the account of Jesus and the rich ruler in Luke 18:18-22, in which our Lord exposed the man's false trust in keeping the commandments.) Anyone relying on himself to earn everlasting life is not relying on Jesus! And therein is the grave danger!

Second, when people confuse Law and Gospel, and are also honest about their sinfulness, they will be uncertain of their salvation, or even despair of it altogether. A healthy conscience readily recognizes one's own wickedness and unworthiness to attain heaven. If eternal life depends on his own obedience, he knows he's doomed. When salvation is by God's grace, however, and is received through faith in Jesus Christ, not by one's works, then the believer can be certain of that salvation. God says, "That is why it is by faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed...." *Romans 4:16* Salvation by Christ is guaranteed; salvation by the law brings only doubt and despair.

God does not want us to doubt or despair, but to be sure of our salvation in Jesus! "And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write this to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." *1 John 5:11-13*

Our Lutheran Confessions sum up the danger of confusing Law and Gospel very nicely in the Formula of Concord. When "the Gospel is again changed into a teaching of the law, the merit of Christ and the Holy Scriptures are obscured, Christians are robbed of their true comfort, and the doors are again opened to the papacy." *Epitome V:11*.

God help us Lutherans to retain the right distinction between Law and Gospel, and to hold this light up tirelessly for unbelievers and erring Christians to see, so that they, together with us, may trust in Christ alone for salvation, give Him all the glory, and be certain of everlasting life!

- Pastor Bishop

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

Christian Education

Sunday School

Perfect Attendance

January 2024

None

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES



March 01

Robert & Marilee Gregory

March 04

Tom & Megan Etter

March 05

Gary & Lisa Pool

March 09

Robert & Debra Dant

March 20

Keith & Terry Gleason

Mar 29

Mike & Deana Thompson

MARCH BIRTHDAYS



March 1

Jerry Bohannan

March 02

Penny Bollinger
Terry Gleason
Elizabeth Kammeyer
Emilie Kesselmayer

March 03

Amy Ashbaker
Darla Schorr
James Widby

March 04

Benjamin Donovan
Jeffrey Hillman
Gary Pool

March 05

Matthew Gudzinskas
Matthew Ruder
Cooper Theleritis

March 06

Heath Norman

March 07

Donna Hansen
Karen Nafziger
Dorothy Sheckler

March 08

Melinda DeHoog
Melissa Turney

March 09

Gerald Norman
Jacob Norman

March 11

Douglas Tiona

March 12

Andrew Knussman
Juanita Knussman

March 13

Adam Becker
Justin Emery
Kaitlyn Owsley

March 14

Nicholas Kesselmayer
Samantha Whitlatch

March 15

Marilyn Liescheidt

March 17

Merle Wiseman

March 18

Jennifer Kesselmayer

March 19

Waltraud Hupke
Blair Ivey

March 21

Henry Lappie

March 23

James Heidbreder
Stephanie Whitlatch

March 24

Ruth Negley
Shirley Schott

March 25

Roy Dagit
Laura Dobbelaire
Patty Gardner
Diane Gould

March 27

Kennedy Britton
Katie Dougherty
Isabella Watson

March 29

Macey Dalton
Ryan Lappie
Donald Schoedel

March 30

Tyler Ruder
Julie Widby

March 31

Kevin Wieland

Remember to change your
clocks on Saturday,
March 9th.

Spring ahead one hour



PARISH NOTES

Church Attendance

	Attend.	# of Services
Jan 2024	377	12
Jan 2023	517	15
Jan 2022	513	15

January Sunday School Attendance

2024:	124
2023:	151
2022:	133

March Videographer

Mar 3, 17, 31	Jim Lonergan
Mar 10, 24	Lexi & Lilly Daniels

March Worship Committee

Jim Lonergan

March Acolytes

<u>Mar 03</u>	8:00	Elizabeth Sayles
<u>Mar 17</u>	10:30	Elizabeth Sayles
<u>Mar 31</u>	7:00	Elizabeth Sayles

SHUT-INS for the MONTH:

Even though some of our members cannot attend church, we want to keep them in our thoughts and prayers and let them know they are not forgotten. Please send a card or pay a visit to these shut-ins this month.

Shut-ins for March are: Ray & Wilma Garber, 1111 S. 18th St., Pekin; Elaine Hapke, resides at McLean County Nursing Home, (use son's address for mail) 1092 Hershey Rd., Normal 61764-2521 and Ruth Hillman, 204 E. Franklin, Tremont 61568.

Thank you from your St. John's Ladies Guild

March Communion Assistance

Mar 05

8:00 a.m.	Randy Couch
10:30 a.m.	Steve Depew

Mar 19

8:00 a.m.	Tom Ivey
10:30 a.m.	Jon Bolt

March Ushers

8:00

Ray Barnes
David Kesselmayr
Garret Kesselmayr

10:30

Brian Lundeen
Mike Nauth

LENT AND HOLY WEEK

Preaching Series:
The Lord's Prayer and Passion"

Mar 6: Third Petition of Lord's Prayer
Sermon: "Jesus' Prayer in Gethemane"
Matthew 26:39, 42

Mar 13: Fifth Petition of Lord's Prayer
Sermon: "Father, Forgive"
Luke 23:33-34a

Mar 20: Sixth Petition of Lord's Prayer
Sermon: "Watch and Pray, that You May Not Enter into Temptation"
Matthew 6:4-41

Mar 28: Maundy Thursday
Fourth Petition of Lord's Prayer
Sermon: "Give Us Today Our Necessary Bread" Matthew 26:26-28

Mar 29: Good Friday
Seventh Petition of Lord's Prayer
Sermon: "Give Us a Blessed End"
Luke 23:46

TREASURER'S REPORT

January 2024

	January	Y-T-D
<u>INCOME</u>	24,340.03	24,340.03
<u>EXPENSES</u>	29,932.85	29,932.85
<u>INCOME—</u>	-5,592.82	-5,592.82
<u>EXPENSE</u>		
<u>General Fund Accounts</u>		
General Fund		21,069.58
General Fund Total		21,069.58
<u>Educational Fund Accounts</u>		
Educ. Grant Fund Checking		2,948.56
Ed Grant CD LCMS 6/24		51,928.87
Ed Grant CD LCMS 6/24		51,900.80
Ed Grant Fund #2 Vanguard		110,815.44
Educational Fund Total		257,365.70
<u>East Bluff Property</u>		
East Bluff Property Vanguard		38,903.95
East Bluff CD LCMS 6/24		53,808.61
East Bluff CD LCMS 6/24		53,887.70
Cat Stock at FMV		93,096.02
		239,379.30
<u>Memorial</u>		
Memorial Fund Checking		30,650.12
Memorial Vanguard		95,636.30
Memorial Fund Total		126,286.42
Building Fund Checking		27,309.17
Sunday School Fund Checking		12,875.45
TOTAL ASSETS		\$ 614,579.22
Checking Acct Balance		93,852.88
		93,852.88
<u>LIABILITIES</u>		
Payroll Liabilities		2,760.99
Misc. LCMS Orgs Fund		64.18
Total Liabilities		2,825.17
<u>Fund Balance</u>		
Net Income (Loss)		-1,139.47
Capital Accounts		612,893.52
Total Fund Balance		611,754.05
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND BALANCE		\$ 614,579.22

**HI-LITES OF ST. JOHN'S VOTERS ASSEMBLY
February 12, 2024**

Mike Nauth called the meeting to order. A quorum was present. Pastor Bishop opened with devotions.

Joel Kilgus from Good Shepherd Lutheran School talked to the assembly about what is going on at the school. Joel indicated that things are going well. While enrollment is down currently for pre-school and kindergarten, it looks like this might rebound for the next school year. Jackie Nauth will be leaving so the school is looking for a teacher. Joel hopes to get this position filled sooner rather than later. Joel stated that the school is in a position where it needs to look at having another capital campaign to help pay off the remaining balance due on the mortgage. A planning study will be completed first to see if a campaign is feasible. Surveys will be completed by randomly contacting congregation members from the 3 churches and parents of students. If you are contacted, please help by answering the survey questions. Joel also mentioned that the spaghetti dinner went very well. They had between 250 – 300 people and raised \$2,500.00. They are thinking about having a dinner once a quarter. Mike Nauth asked if the assembly thought we should vote to go forward with the capital campaign if the survey results are favorable. Diane Gould motioned, seconded by Dave Drockelman, to, as a congregation, go forward with the recommendation of the feasibility study results. Motion carried.

The January Parish Report was reviewed. A motion was made by Bob Oliverius, seconded by Diane Gould, to approve the January Parish Report. Motion carried.

The January meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Julie Wagner, seconded by Ray Barnes, to approve the January meeting minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurer's Report – Rod Bollinger presented the January Treasurer's Report. There was a net loss for the month of \$5,592.82. All committees were at or below budgeted amounts for the month. Appears it was a low-income month. We did get a \$1,000.00 donation to be used for the purchase of tables and chairs for the gym. The money was put into the Memorial Fund until a separate fund can be used to track donations. Rod noted that monthly expenses were typical. In addition, it was noted that contribution statements will be printed and mailed to members. Rod is working with the accountant on a simpler way to display the financial information.

A motion was made by Nancy Drockelman, seconded by Randy Couch, to accept the January Treasurer's Report. Motion carried.

Board of Trustees – Dave Kesselmayer reported that the Trustees met with the copier sales rep and we have agreed on getting a copier that is of similar size but that prints less pages per minute. He checked with Sandy Ferguson and she indicated that this should not be an issue. This will save us about \$70.00 per month. The Trustees are still waiting on proposals for the insurance coverage. There are some water line issues at Ewe's Home Furnishings that are being worked on. A plumber has been consulted and the Trustees will do as much preliminary work as possible to defray costs. Dave indicated that there is an issue in the bell tower as well as a crack above the stained glass window. A quote has been received in the amount of \$18,415.00 for the work to repair the bell tower. Dave indicated that he doesn't know if this work can be completed this year. He will talk to the Board of Finance. The Trustees received a quote from Facet Technologies for the cost of extending Wi-fi. The quote was for \$2,060.00. Brian Ford indicated that he would donate the cost of the work to extend the Wi-fi if the Trustees could run the cable. The drains in the boiler room have been cleaned out. A question was asked if waiting would cause any risk to the bell tower and Dave indicated that it was not something the contractor said was urgent. It was also asked if the issue with the crack and bell tower are the same issue and it was indicated that they are different issues.

Board of Elders – Ross Gould reported that the board met last week. Ross is the committee chair, with Randy Couch as vice-chair and with Jon Bolt serving as secretary. The committee is still looking for another Elder. There is 1 confirmand, with the possibility of 3, for 7th grade this fall. There are 3 people in adult instruction. Member visitations continue and the Elders are seeing some progress. The Elders will be serving dinner for the February 21st Lenten service.

Board of Finance – No report.

Board of Christian Education – Leslie Hauk reported that current Sunday School attendance varies between 1 and 7 students each Sunday. The board would like to see more children attending, especially those who are age eligible for the pre-school group and who have not yet started attending Sunday School. The Youth Group's activity for February will be Wacky Gym Games on Sunday the 18th at 3:00. Youth from Trinity Pekin, Sand Prairie, and Trinity Manito have been invited to join us. We plan to have a devotion and serve tacos after the games and are hopeful for a good turnout. The Board of Christian Education will serve the Lenten supper on February 28th. Joel Kilgus has indicated that plans are underway for Vacation Bible School to be held June 9th – June 12th. The committee is looking for someone to teach an adult class also.

Board of Worship – Julie Wagner reported that the committee met on February 1st. The committee will be serving the Lenten supper on February 14th. The committee is still looking for an additional member to serve a 3-year term. We are still in need of a piano player to play for the choir. Julie indicated that she talked to a friend and they made a recommendation to check with Bradley University to see if they have a music student that might be interested.

Board of Evangelism – Pastor Bishop reported that the board will meet next week. It was indicated that there are several open spots available for greeters.

Board of Stewardship – Nancy Swearingen reported that the committee met this evening and she is the new chairperson. Nancy indicated that the board helped 3 families with food from the Share Program. If you know of someone who needs help with food, please let the board know.

Long Range Planning Committee – No report.

Educational Grant Fund Committee – Ross Gould reported that there will be a short meeting following tonight’s meeting with chairs of all the boards. Hopefully he will have something put together for next month’s meeting.

East Bluff Property Committee – No report.

Constitution By-laws Committee – No report.

Unfinished business – No report.

New business – Mike Nauth asked if the assembly wanted to make a motion to suspend the July and August Voters Assembly meetings this year since there is a quorum. A motion was made by Dave Drockelman, seconded by Diane Gould, to suspend the July and August Voters Assembly meeting. Motion carried.

Mike Nauth also indicated that Jackie Nauth has received a call to teach in Minnesota so they will be moving. Mike is currently serving as President and according to the constitution, the Vice-President will take over. Mike also serves on the board at Good Shepherd. Mike will be moving at the beginning a July. Since there is a lot going on currently at the school, Mike felt it would be beneficial to have a new board member in place sooner rather than later. Mike asked if there was anyone interested in serving his remaining term. Ross Gould indicated that he would like to nominate John Neumann to serve out the remaining term. Dave Drockelman noted that we should probably have a ballot that would need to be voted on at the next meeting. It was noted that any other candidates would be added and voted on next month.

Mike reminded everyone that the Lenten services along with a dinner beforehand start this Wednesday with Ash Wednesday.

A motion was made by Bob Oliverius, seconded by Randy Couch, to close the meeting. Motion carried.

The meeting closed with the Lord’s Prayer.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Wagner
Secretary

IN OUR PRAYERS

If you know of anyone who needs to be added, please let the church office know.

All our shut-ins

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| Pastor Niemann | Sandy Morgan |
| Robert Rilea | Jeff Ferree |
| Peggy Farlin | Debbie Miller |
| Marlana Montgomery | Addie Burling |
| Julie Rilea | Eileen Tiona |
| Gabriella Kesselmayr | Virginia Tackmann |
| Pat Proehl | Suzanne Reising |
| Kellen Norman | Joyce Barnes |
| Lee Morgan | Ray Garber |
| Roy Dagit | John Durdle |
| Suzanne Reising | Stefanie Wilson |
| Scott Ruschmeyer | Keith Gleason |
| Anna Knussman | Butch Williams |
| Hayden Jackson | |



Reminder to Designate Your Thrivent Choice Dollars by March 31st

Thrivent Financial members have until March 31 to direct their Choice Dollars for charity. **Don't let them expire!** Designate your Choice Dollars and **put God's Word in the hands of someone who does not have the Bible** in their own language.



The Share Program would like to thank all who have donated food and funds to supply items to those individuals who need some help. We could not provide items without your assistance.

Received a thank you letter from Concordia Seminary - St. Louis for the donation we sent them.

Lutheran for life sent a thank you letter for our faithful ministry partnership and steadfast support.

Lutheran Heritage Foundation thanked us for our donation.



HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY

MARCH LIBRARY CORNER

By Eileen Tiona



"He calls his friends and neighbors together and says, Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep." Luke 15:5

I haven't any new books to report on this month, but would like to invite everyone to come into the library and check out all the wonderful books that are available.

YOUTH GROUP



In May the Youth Group will help senior members of the congregation with spring cleanup and other helpful chores. So watch for the date and contact us if you would like help with yard work, etc.

CHURCH RUMMAGE SALE & BAKE SALE

will be on Friday, April 5 and Saturday, April 6 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the church gym. Come shop to help us raise funds for new tables and chairs for the gym.

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**THE KAPELLE
OF CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO**

will be at Christ Lutheran Church, 311 Hershey Rd., Normal, IL on Sunday, March 10 at 3 p.m.

Event is free and open to the public. A freewill offering in support the Kapelle will be received.

Learn more at christlutherannormal.org

GOOD SHEPHERD LUTHERAN SCHOOL

- Mar 1 No School due to Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Mar 5 Preschool—Kindergarten Roundup 6 to 7:30 pm
- Mar 7 Spring Pictures - Pre-School & Sports Pictures
- Mar 8 Spring Pictures - (PreK and K—8, Group Pictures)
- Mar 14 PTL Meeting @ 6:00 pm
- Mar 17 Sing at Trinity - Manito @ 9 am
- Mar 21 Spring Musical
- Mar 29 to Apr 5 Spring Break—No School

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Camp CILCA Lowdown

March 2– Pancake Dinner 10 am to 1 pm
A *free* "Thank You" for all CILCA supporters! Come anytime between 10 am and 1 pm and let the CILCA staff and Board serve you delicious pancakes & sausage.

March 30 — Spring Work Day
Help get Camp CILCA read for the warmer weather. Many hands make light work. 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. Lunch will be provided.

March 31 — Early Bird Discount Ends!
Sign up before midnight to save 10% off every week of camp!

See bulletin board in gym for dates for summer camps.

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Mike Nauth announced that Jackie has received a call to teach in Minnesota so they will be moving. Mike is currently serving as President and according to the constitution, the Vice-President will take over. Mike also serves on the board at Good Shepherd. Mike will be moving at the beginning of July. With so much going on currently at the school, Mike felt it would be beneficial to have a new board member in place sooner rather than later. We are asking if there is anyone interested in serving his remaining term. If so, please contact Mike or the church office.

(Address Service Requested)

Bible Wordsearch

Wordsearch 281

Matt.21:31-46

Parables

E	N	G	C	Y	E	N	R	U	O	J	T	N	E	S
R	E	N	T	E	D	T	L	S	L	L	A	F	E	C
A	V	I	D	A	R	S	T	N	A	N	E	T	N	A
H	E	R	R	E	W	R	I	E	H	T	U	R	T	P
S	I	B	A	P	V	I	N	E	Y	A	R	D	S	S
S	L	T	E	E	A	E	N	R	F	H	S	R	M	T
E	E	F	H	R	V	R	E	E	A	A	E	E	S	O
D	B	O	T	I	M	P	A	R	P	M	T	T	Y	N
P	S	T	G	E	E	O	V	B	R	R	N	H	T	E
I	E	C	R	N	H	E	D	A	L	A	E	S	E	C
E	I	E	T	E	S	P	F	G	V	E	E	S	S	R
C	Z	P	D	T	N	P	O	R	N	R	L	H	S	O
E	E	S	M	R	O	W	E	R	R	I	O	A	M	W
S	D	E	Y	R	O	S	O	A	P	W	K	S	S	D
I	N	R	C	O	L	L	E	C	T	F	R	U	I	T

BRING	ARREST
CROP	BELIEVE
EVEN	CAPSTONE
EYES	CROWD
FALLS	COLLECT
FRUIT	FATHER
GIVEN	FARMERS
HEARD	HARVEST
HEIR	JOURNEY
LAST	KINGDOM
LORD	PARABLE
OWNER	PROPHET
PIECES	RENTED
REPENT	RESPECT
SEIZED	SERVANTS
SENT	TENANTS
SHARE	TREATED
SHOW	VINEYARD
TRUTH	WINEPRESS

After you find all the hidden words the left over letters spell out a Bible verse reading from the top left to the bottom right
