



## **THE PILGRIM HERALD**

February 2017

### **PILGRIM EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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### **The Pilgrim Herald**

Pilgrim Ev. Lutheran Church LC-MS  
462 Meadowbrook Drive, West Bend, WI 53090  
February 2017  
FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR FISHER

**Psalms 117:1-2(ESV) <sup>1</sup> Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples! <sup>2</sup> For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever. Praise the Lord!**

Greetings in the name of our living and forgiving Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. On January 18<sup>th</sup> 2017, Pilgrim turned 62. I think it good to remember our past as we look to our future, so let us not forget, that on Monday January 18<sup>th</sup> the founding members of Pilgrim met and signed the charter and we are blessed to still have two of those members with us, Erv and Ruth Mertz, I pray that we will continue to take the time to thank them for their faith and support over the years, even as we continue to give thanks to God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for His continued divine providence, provision, and protection.

For this month I would like to share with you an article that I have found to be timely and helpful it was published in the January Lutheran Witness.

God bless,  
Rev. Joseph M. Fisher (Heb. 12:1-2)

#### **Political Contrast**

By [Adriane \(Dorr\) Heins](#) on January 16, 2017 in [Lutheran Witness, Web-exclusive Stories!](#) [3](#)  
by *Greg Alms*

There is a deep shadow that lays across the first lines of Luke chapter 2, and it is a political one. Caesar Augustus, the emperor of Rome, the most powerful man in the world, opens the scene by commanding the entire world. Everyone must be registered. That is a politician with power. He casts a long shadow.

Politics is still that way. Elections and laws and policies and cable news and presidents flow on in a never-ending attention-grabbing stream. In 2016, we were fixated on the political process. It was a “critical election” for all sides. It seemed and still seems so important. In many ways, it is. The political process has enormous power and can affect our lives and the Church in profound ways. It can cast a long shadow.

#### *Smaller things*

But Luke’s narrative is written to focus our attention on smaller things. From the Roman colossus Caesar, the spotlight shifts to Joseph and Mary, an ordinary couple, obeying the imperial directive and scurrying to Bethlehem. There is a frantic arrival. There is a baby born in a cattle stall. The contrast with the great Augustus could not be greater: the emperor with all power versus the infant with nothing.

But Luke has set us up and the politician everyone notices turns out to be the least important part of the story. For the sky soon opens and angels fall out of heaven, and they are not pointing to Rome or sending out tweets about Caesar. They are singing to shepherds in the dark and hurrying them towards the baby in a feeding trough. It turns out that what is important in this story is what is smallest. The baby no one knows is far more significant than the politician.

He is far more important to each of us for that baby is none other than God made flesh, the Savior of the world, the one who has come to save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). No emperor or president can ever hope to do that. But He is more important in history as well. Only a few people still remember Caesar Augustus. Jesus Christ remade the shape of Western civilization. His appearance on the stage of human affairs changed everything and continues to reshape the face of the world even today, not by setting up kingdoms or nations but with the humble stuff of preaching and Sacraments and Christian lives of witness to the good news that

the Son of God has come, suffered, died and rose and lives today to forgive sins. We do well in the feverish atmosphere of politics today to hear Luke chapter 2 again. That tiny baby is the important one. When it comes to politics, Christians do not withdraw completely like some or invest our whole selves like others. We do not throw up our hands in ultimate victory or in despair. We engage and stand up for what is right. But Luke teaches us to do so with a quiet trust in someone who is not a politician. We go forward with confidence that the one in the manger is the one with true power. He is the one who truly “rules the world with truth and grace” (LSB 387).

*The Rev. Paul Gregory Alms is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Catawba, N.C.*

#### **‘MARTIN LUTHER THE IDEA THAT CHANGED THE WORLD’**

is being presented at the Marcus Cinema in Menomonee Falls on Wednesday, February 15 at 6:30 pm.

This movie is produced by the award-winning film makers Steve Boettcher and Mike Trinklein. This film reflects the accurate historical details and the true nature of Luther’s work during the Reformation.

The Milwaukee premiere is hosted by Trinity Lutheran Church in Freistadt. A portion of ticket sales will be donated to support the distribution of Luther’s Small Catechism to immigrants from the Congo.

To purchase tickets, visit [tickets.NewLutherMovie.com](http://tickets.NewLutherMovie.com)

**Pilgrim Ev. Lutheran Church, Council  
Minutes, January 9, 2017.**

Meeting was called to order by Vice-President Jim Behrens at 7:00 PM.

Present were Pastor Fisher, Pastor Raffa, Fred Leffin, David Boehlke, Mary Lehtimaki, Judy Frank, Jim Behrens, Gary Erdmann. (Absent: Jerry Sommer, Susan Stadelmayer, Tanner Schmidt, Carolyn McAfee, Ron Virchow)

Pastor Fisher opened with prayer.

Vice-President Jim Behrens asked for any corrections to the last minutes of December 12, 2016. There was a correction: The Council Committee wrote the letter to be mailed to all members of the congregation. The minutes were approved as corrected.

Correspondence received was from Passionate Believers Conference, February 4<sup>th</sup> at Divine Redeemer, Hartland; The Fort Wayne Foundation requesting donations for tuition assistance; and The Orphan Grain Train asking for money donations for shipping expenses.

Elders Report given by Gary Erdmann: Head Elder is now Tanner Schmidt. The Circuit Leaders Conference, Stevens Point, will be January 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Adult Classes have been started also. Group pictures for the congregation will be taken by Jeff Barger on Sundays between the services. The new Introit has been well received. There was discussion on the budget and will appear on the agenda for the Voters meeting, January 29<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 pm.

Trustees Report: David Boehlke stated that there have been a number of breakdowns, eg. The furnace in Pastor Raffa's parsonage. Also a

few other minor issues that have been addressed.

Board of Education Report: Pastor Fisher reported that the Sunday School is going well. There is a larger Confirmation class this year.

Pastors report: Pastor Fisher stated that St. Andrews Lutheran Church had called Rev. Michael Larson of Wittenberg, WI but he turned it down. Pastor Sorenson will continue duties at St. Andrews. Pastor Fisher also reported that an adult will be confirmed in the second service next Sunday and two more adults will be ready shortly. A baby will be baptized in second service next Sunday also.

Pastor Raffa reported that Laurie Lotz of the Script Program would like to be relieved of the position. Julie Raffa will take over the duty. The profit for 2016 was \$1371.42 and will be used to fund the Higher Things gathering at Valpo University, summer 2017.

A question about the Raffle Sale, Silent Auction, Christmas Shoppe has been tabled again to the next meeting.

We are waiting for more information. The concern is about holding this event in the church and a conflict with our church doctrine and practicing what we teach.

Pastor Raffa closed the meeting with prayer.

Pastor Fisher made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Frank

**Board of Elders Meeting Minutes,** Pilgrim  
Ev. Lutheran Church  
12/5/2016

The meeting began with prayer by Pr. Fisher at 6:30. Present at the meeting were Prs. Fisher and Raffa, Howie, Ron, Ken, Gary, Brian, and Tanner. Absent was Dave.

Schedules were made through 1/8.

A question was raised whether Absolution is properly a Sacrament. Pr. Fisher noted that arguments could be made either way (viz., is the pastor the physical element or not?), and that the question is largely irrelevant.

There is still need for assistance for the website.

The elders discussed the question of tuition assistance. Pr. Raffa submitted a letter officially requesting assistance from the church for his children's education as well as a letter explaining the situation at large. Both are attached.

Pr. Fisher read a letter from Mary L. encouraging her brothers and sisters in Christ to assist our congregation with its budget difficulty.

Pr. Fisher has received a generous scholarship toward the International Academy of Apologetics, Evangelism, and Human Rights. He will be attending this coming July. The elders have approved the formation of a fund for those in the church desiring to support him with gifts.

The study will be postponed again until next month owing to time.

The meeting concluded with prayer by Pastor Raffa at 7:34.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tanner Schmidt

**Board of Elders End of Year Report 2016**  
Pilgrim Lutheran Church

There will be two changes in the board of elders: Allen moved away this past fall. Ken's term expires at the end of the year. Both positions have suitable replacements in line.

A question concerning the designation or creation of a dedicated diabetic aid station for use by the ushers was considered.

A suggestion was raised to softly introduce the elders to their respective parishioners by means of distributed photo-ID cards or something to that effect posted on the bulletin board.

The church directory was updated this year with pictures being taken at year's end. A suggestion for an online directory protected by password access was raised, but this was not favored.

This year we had our first Easter Vigil service. Pr. Fisher noted the excellent feedback for it, noting appreciation both for the historic liturgy and for the convenience offered to a number of our members. We plan to have the services in the future.

Discussion concerning the website noted that the congregation indeed ought to pay for it. Finding a helper to run the site has been an unresolved issue throughout the year.

The congregation has begun celebrating the Eucharist every Sunday. The liturgy of our services will incorporate the Apostles' Creed into the Divine Service of the 2nd and 4th weeks because this creed is a treasure of the historic church and is regularly used in catechetical instruction. Notably, given the fact that there is not a command from Scripture or the Confessions to only use the Nicene creed in a communion service, this is a perfectly acceptable practice.

The possibility of acquiring a processional cross for use in Feastday and High Holy day services was considered. The pastors and elders are in favor of the idea. Pr. Raffa noted that it is necessary to educate the congregation of the historic use of such in the Church catholic before introducing anything new. Pr. Raffa also notes that a crucifer will be needed for services in which it is to be used, perhaps being the attending elder at the service. Pr. Raffa notes that a crucifix (with a corpus) is both preferable and more likely to offend than a bare cross. The pastors also note that we shall need to investigate costs and general sentiment of the congregation.

At present, the cost of such remains the primary obstacle, though perhaps cheap and appropriately crafted options are available. This matter will be brought to the Church Council for further discussion.

The elders note infrequent lapses among the ushers, a matter to be resolved through redistribution of usher teams, more ushers, and potentially a head usher taking the reins.

Pr. Fisher mentioned a proposal to sponsor/adopt Taylor Brown, deaconess student and former intern. The general consensus was positive, inclining toward a collection basket, the funds of which would be matched within the congregation's ability.

It was noted that inactive and unaccountable members will be soon released from our rosters. Any with knowledge of whereabouts will be sought, as the pastors and elders desire to be as evangelical as possible in this situation.

The bulletin was reformed this year, being the product of the pastors' and elders' discussions of implementing tools suggested by our study materials for the purpose of continued catechesis for all.

Pr. Fisher notes that a 9:15 slot on Sundays could be well spent with Pr. Raffa leading a catechetical series of studies. This would serve both youth and adults. This could conceivably begin in the new year. Pr. Raffa notes that this would be an excellent way for new members to readily integrate into the fabric of the congregation. Moreover, Pr. Fisher notes that this can help with delicate situations or exceptional circumstances of varied natures. In short, the goal is to begin a cycle of catechism classes.

Concerning our debt from the new addition: we are not indebted to the bank, but roughly 25K remain owed to our lender.

Concerning finances and the budget, we are not at present meeting the budget. The pastors and elders note that the budget shortfall is beyond our ability to readily "fix", and there are simply two possibilities: either the congregation spend less (lose staff) or it take in more. It may be necessary to announce this to the congregation after service, given that the pastors, elders, and congregation do not view it as appropriate to have such things in the bulletin, and certainly not in the preaching if offensive to the distinction of Law and Gospel. In any event, this matter must be somehow addressed soon.

Moreover, Pr. Fisher notes that work is needed on the parsonages. This is not simply a question of quality of life for our pastors, but simply faithful use of the resources entrusted to the congregation.

Moreover, the elders note that a possible method to help in this would be to better regulate the tuition assistance given our families. Budgetary issues notwithstanding, the elders wish to see this fund documented and applied for in writing by those who would take advantage of it if only for record keeping purposes.

Moreover, it has come to the elders' attention that the Raffa family has not been receiving tuition assistance for their children at Peace Lutheran Academy in Sussex. This is due to an unforeseen omission of the school when the tuition assistance program was inaugurated. The elders hope to see this matter addressed at the January voters' meeting.

A question was raised concerning the 500th anniversary of the Reformation and Pilgrim's observance thereof. The elders note that we will somehow commemorate this festival, though this will be discussed in depth in the future. Suggestions thus far include a special service, perhaps with a guest preacher, and a charity dinner with the proceeds going to a mission. The introit began to be sung responsively rather than spoken responsively on the Sunday services this year. To assist the congregation and pastors in this historic practice of the Church, the Church Council instituted the office of cantor at Pilgrim, who will lead the congregation in this singing, a necessity given our lack of choir.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tanner Schmidt  
Board of Elders Recording Secretary

## **Board of Elders Meeting Minutes, Pilgrim**

Ev. Lutheran Church

1/2/2017

The meeting began with prayer by Pr. Fisher at 6:30. Present at the meeting were Prs. Fisher and Raffa, Dave, Brian, John, Tanner, Ron, Dennis, Gary, and Howie.

Schedules were made through 2/9.

Pr. Fisher will be at a meeting from Jan. 23rd through the 24th.

Pr. Fisher notes that three adults along with 8 youths will be confirmed in the near future.

Adult catechesis classes, to be held at 9:15 on Sundays, will begin soon.

We will ask the photographer to hold a number of group pictures on an upcoming Sunday for the photo directory.

It has been suggested via some positive feedback to continue to hold VBS events for those with special needs. We plan to.

The elders note with joy that the congregation has gladly embraced chanting the introit. Gradually, new tones will be introduced as well. The elders briefly considered the question of adding backup or additional cantors, though these duties can be filled by either pastor if needed.

The bulletins have been missing dates on them recently. This was merely an oversight that will be fixed.

A question concerning the envelopes and distribution thereof was considered.

A question concerning offering envelopes will further be addressed at the voters meeting.

Some discussion regarding the pictorial directory was held, though further pictures are needed before advancing meaningfully. The elders hope to see high participation in this.

A discussion was held at length concerning our budget and elements thereof. We note that the budget is tight, and there are a number of God-pleasing avenues toward which to dedicate funds. While we indeed trust that our Lord provides, the question at present concerns what to

do with what He has provided. The elders are cautiously optimistic that giving will increase as the needs of the congregation become more commonly known.

We will gradually seek out members who have been unable to have their photos taken to seek out pictures.

Discussion was held concerning the voters meeting. The elders hope to be present and encourage a high turnout. We earnestly hope that the issue of tuition assistance is dealt with in a God-pleasing way.

Tanner Schmidt has been designated head elder. The book study was postponed due to time. The elders wish Pr. Raffa a happy birthday.

The meeting concluded with prayer by Pastor Raffa at 8:18.

Respectfully submitted,  
Tanner Schmidt

### **Trustees Annual Report 2016**

In addition to the usual lawn mowing, snow removal, and other ongoing maintenance, a number of projects were addressed in 2016 by the Trustees along with volunteers and contractors. These include:

- Coordinated installation of a soap dispenser in the dishwasher
- Re-plating of a pitted pouring chalice
- Replacement of (rotted) basement egress storm windows
- Replacement of two computers and software upgrade
- Parsonage dishwasher replaced
- Two water heaters replaced
- Old wall air conditioner removed from parsonage, hole closed and siding replaced and more...

Many thanks to all who volunteered, donated time, worked to find goods and services at a re-

duced cost, or contributed in any way to help keep things working and in order. Our appreciation to Jeff Barger who has completed two terms as a Trustee and contributed much to our efforts. We also welcome Mark Ringgenberg to the Trustees starting in 2017.

There is increasing concern about maintenance that has been deferred for lack of funds. Some of the mechanical equipment has not had professional service for some time, and that is catching up with us. Having no heat in a parsonage on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day could have resulted in a very high repair bill, but because of the mild weather, and thanks to a *very* patient Pastor and family, we were able to put off the repair for a day. The sidewalks need leveling, both for safety and to reduce wear and tear on the snow removal equipment and operators. There will be a need to replace roofing on the church, and windows in a parsonage. Each year, more things reach the end of their useful life and will need to be repaired or replaced. The congregation has made a commitment to provide training for staff, as needed, and we have entered the computer age (more than 10 years ago at Pilgrim) and need to keep up with equipment replacement and software updates. We will need to address these issues, especially in the budget, before they become overwhelming.

Respectfully submitted:  
David Boehlke



### **IN OUR COMMUNAL PRAYERS**

**All servicemen** at home and deployed, especially Isaac Wirtz (son of Rev. Nick Wirtz) who is stationed in Baghdad.

Lord God of hosts, stretch forth Your almighty arm to strengthen and protect those who serve in the armed forces of our country. Support them in times of war, and in times of peace keep them from all evil, giving them courage and loyalty. Grant that in all things they may serve with integrity and with honor; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

Father of all mercy, You never fail to help those who call on You for help. Give strength and confidence to Your [son/daughter] in [his/her] time of great need that [he/she] may know that You are near and that You uphold [him/her] with Your everlasting arms. Grant that, resting on Your protection, [he/she] may fear no evil, for You are with [him/her] to comfort and deliver [him/her]; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**For our Seminaries**, especially the Ethiopian Lutheran Church and Seminary

O God, through Your Holy Spirit You illuminate the minds and sanctify the lives of those whom You call to the work of pastors and teachers. Look with favor upon this seminary for the instruction and formation of those who are to serve in the sacred ministry of Your Church. Bless those who teach and those who learn that they may apply themselves with ready diligence to the knowledge of Your Word, which alone is able to make us wise unto salvation; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

*Note: After much consideration, we have decided to add a page in the newsletter that lists all of those struggling with health issues. (Not published on the website). Each month we will also have various petitions that you can pray at home for various needs all people in Christ, and especially those within our immediate church family here at Pilgrim. In the bulletin we will list those sick and infirm on the basis of need and emergency. In the event that you would like to have your name or your loved one's name removed from the prayer list, please let us know.*

## **KNOW YOUR ELDER**

### **MEMBERS**

Aasen – Chapman

### **ELDER**

Gary Erdmann

Chard – L. Gierach

John Heger

O. Gierach – Hoffman

Brian Skrentny

Horlamus – Kuenzel

Tanner Schmidt

R. Kutz – S. Neuman

Howard Glassel

Neumann – Schleif

Ronald Kabitzke

Schmidt – D. Swanson

Dennis Engmann

S. Swanson – Zunker

Dave Fellenz

## **Sunday School News**

**Just a reminder that we have Sunday School classes for all children age 3 through eighth grade. We meet at 9:15 a.m. in the lower level. Our Bible stories for February include:**

*“Jesus Is Rejected at Nazareth”*

Luke 4:16-30

*“Jesus Call Disciples”*

Matthew 4:12-25

*“Jesus Heals Many”*

Luke 4:31-44

*“Jesus Heals a Man Who Is Paralyzed”*

Mark 2:1-12

**Men and Women of the Congregation**, you are invited to join the Quilters. Even if you do not sew there is much to be done. Please join the Quilters on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 9:00 am in the Old Fellowship Hall.

**SYMPATHY & PRAYERS** for Jane Rockrohr on the death of her husband Rev. David Rockrohr. David was called to his Heavenly Home on January 25, 2017.

## **Congratulations and Welcome to :**

Michelle Bandow, Laura Susnick and Angela Torre. All three were confirmed in their faith on January 29, 2017. Let us all welcome them to Pilgrim.

## **\*\*URGENT AND IMPORTANT\*\*:**

If you have moved or switched to a cell phone from a land line. PLEASE let the office know. We would like to have an updated directory for your personal use. Thank you.

## **Ladies Guild/LWML**

I always give thanks to God for all of you...the response for the Ingathering to the Safe Harbor Homeless Shelter was amazing! We took all of the items to the Wisconsin Winter Retreat..

Our group is hosting the Ash Wednesday Lenten Supper with a menu of pulled pork sandwiches, salads, and desserts.

All ladies of our congregation are invited to join us at our next meeting on Tuesday, February 21, at noon. Bring your sandwich or salad. Our hostesses, Mary Lehtimaki and Judy Frank will provide desserts, juice and coffee. We will also enjoy our guest speaker, Adrianna Lubner (Granddaughter of Carole Oesterreich). She will share her India mission trip experiences.

## **Looking for a Christmas tree for next year?**

Orville and Anne-Marie Gierach have a 7-8' tall artificial Christmas tree that they are willing to give away. Please contact the Church office for more information.



## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

- 1- Ruth Mertz
- 2- Sierra Farmier
- 3- Aaron Szatkiewicz
- 4- Andrew Hoffmann
- 5- Michele Deffenbaugh
- 6- Jim Behrens  
Fred Leffin  
Nancy Scherer
- 7- Keith Gierach
- 9- Clayton Kempf  
Jamie Carron
- 10- Kevin Deffenbaugh  
Rebecca Boehlke
- 11- Archer Roell
- 12- Jim Hodge  
Brynlee Kempf
- 13- John Held
- 15- Caden Olson
- 16- Lauren Tarvin
- 17- Lorraine Gierach  
Mark Rosenthal
- 19- Anna Barger  
Dean Milis  
Carol Myers
- 20- LaRaine Farmier
- 22- Samuel Grosskreuz  
Margene Leffin
- 23- Shirley Mayer  
Diandra Henckel  
Diane Zell
- 24- Makenzie Daley
- 25- Dylan Kabitzke

- 27- Stephen Spalda, Sr.
- 28- Jodi Henckel



## **ANNIVERSARIES**

- 1- Shane & Melissa Oppermann
- 15- Robert & Janene Becker
- 19- Glenn & Pam Zenda
- 20- James & Joan Prine
- 25- Jonathan & Sandra Thames
- 28- David & Marilyn Kasten

**The Daily Lectionary readings are listed weekly in the Bulletin.**

### **Concordia Seminary St. Louis**

Have you ever considered becoming a pastor or deaconess? If so, Re. Bill Wrede from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis would like to meet with you.

Rev. Wrede is interested in meeting with prospective students of all ages—elementary school age through adults. Appointments are individual, informal, and family/friends are welcome to come with you. Appointments are not necessary but encouraged. If you are interested in scheduling a specific time, please contact Rev. Wrede at 314-505-7221 or [wredew@csl.edu](mailto:wredew@csl.edu).

Rev. Wrede will be at Concordia University on Tues. Feb. 21 from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. in the Alumni Heritage room., also on Wed. Feb. 22 from 8:00 am. –1:00 pm. in the Alumni Heritage room.



## **A Call to Prayer**

Marriage. Life. Religious liberty. They are all deemed “controversial” in the public square, buzz words for “Don’t talk about this at the neighborhood party” or, “Stick to discussing the weather and sports...just to be safe.”

And yet each topic matters. Fundamentally, they matter because people matter. And people matter to us as Lutherans because they matter to Jesus.

We teach about these issues, we communicate and catechize about them, and we work to establish offices because we desire to bear witness to Christ, even in the public square, even in a culture where people don’t want to hear about Him.

### **Remaining faithful**

This month, as our nation prepares to swear in a new president, we ask you to join with your fellow LCMS Lutherans in prayer—for our churches, for our members, for our country, for her elected leaders. That, of course, is your joy and challenge in this intensely politically charged atmosphere: to remain faithful, to stay the course, to pray!

Our Lord hasn’t left you alone to be a voice for His gift of marriage or to speak for the value of the lives He creates. He remains with you. He is not absent. He is still at the helm, the head of the body, still leading, still guiding.

As you pray, know that as Christians we are together bearing witness to Christ in and by all that we do, speaking truth in the public square, at our own kitchen tables and over our backyard fences, remaining firm in the faith. And we trust that God—in His perfect time and way—will work all things for His good!

*Holy Father, as Your People, we turn to You, our only refuge in every need. You see how confused and concerned our nation is. Have mercy on us, O Lord, have mercy!*

*Show us the path forward that we, our elected leaders and those who have authority over us may be faithful in the vocations you have given us to do. Cause us to be uncompromising witnesses to Your will and Your ways, both in our homes and in the public square.*

*Help us to proclaim in Christ the gift of forgiveness for every sin we have committed, eve-*

*ry time we have not spoken the truth in love, every instance where we have remained silent. Give us a voice to speak for the unborn, the joy to lift up the gift of marriage, and the willingness to speak on behalf of people of faith who are, even now, persecuted for their faith in You.*

*We have no right to ask this, save through the merits and meditation of Him whose blood atones for the sin of the whole world, even Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.*

### **How can I get involved?**

- *Watch for insight from President Harrison.* A special mailing from President Harrison will be headed your way soon, and you won't want to miss it.
- *Keep on top of the issues.* Email [freetobefaithful@lcms.org](mailto:freetobefaithful@lcms.org) to get the latest on the Synod's Free to Be Faithful work as well as the Lutheran Center for Religious Liberty.
- *Pray!* Print out a copy of the above prayer as a reminder to pray for the president, elected leaders and the nation.
- *Learn more.* Visit [lcms.org/lcrl](http://lcms.org/lcrl) to learn about the Synod's work to establish an office in Washington, D.C.

## Let's Go To Togo!

Though the newsletter title invites you to “Go To Togo,” we will begin with a visit to the region of Toulepleu, Côte d’Ivoire. LCMS mission work began here decades ago, though the presence of missionaries have been absent for some time. This was due to the civil war which broke out in 2002. The mission work focused on the far west region in the forest region, bordering Liberia and Guinea. The national language of Côte d’Ivoire is French, though this particular region has a mix of French and English speakers due to many Liberian nationals who settled there after a civil war (1989) in Liberia. One must keep in mind that although there is a national language, the main language will be the local or regional language of the people group. Here in Toulepleu, Guéré is the language and the name of the larger people group.



There was a variety of mission work in Toulepleu which included theological education, medical missions, social, and agricultural assistance (purchase of seeds, resources for fields, etc.). Due to the war, much of the progress was lost as people fled for their lives to places of safety. Yet the church continued on by the grace of God. When it was safe to return home, the young Lutheran congregations reassembled with around 11 parishes, a handful of preaching stations, and hopes for mission starts. For over a decade, there were only three ordained pastors. But this all changed this past summer.

What might a pastor do on the 10th anniversary of his ordination? For me, I took a 10 hour bus ride across Côte d’Ivoire with fellow missionary, [Rev. Fred Reinhardt](#), to participate in the ordination of four candidates and former students of the CLET in Togo.

What a day of joy! On foot for miles and with numerous necessities placed in bowls balanced on the head, members of parishes from the entire region came together to celebrate in a 5 hour service filled with the preaching of the Word, the Rite of Ordination, song and dance, personal congratulations, and plentiful gifts presented to the newly ordained. Following a local custom, baby powder was sprinkled upon the pastors as well as many participants to signify the joy of the day (the equivalent of confetti, I suppose).

It is not often that one is able to witness the more-than-doubling of a pastorate. But what a joy it is to see the work of the Spirit in this young church body. Through the ongoing work of the CLET, under-shepherds of Christ are being formed to serve throughout the country. After this academic year, three students will return to begin their vicarage and three more will continue their studies at the school. The expectation is that one will serve as a mission planter in an eastern region where one small congregation has been formed but does not yet have a pastor. Another will serve in a sizable town near Abidjan, the main port city of the country. With the work of the Holy Spirit through the proclamation of the Gospel and the Sacraments, this church body will grow throughout the entire country. As of today, the church body now has 23 parishes, but only 7 ordained pastors. Thus our work of forming pastors to shepherd and to proclaim the Gospel throughout Africa continues.



...to the Present...

The days of the academic year roll onward. I continue to teach an introductory class on the Liturgy—History and Practice to our new students, 14 in number, as well as an overview of various other liturgies with the Pastoral 2 (final year) students. This latter class touches the various rites which a pastor will encounter in the parish. Occasionally, marriages are still arranged. How might the pastor approach the parish to encourage marriage between the faithful while not letting the women be forced into a marriage with a pagan, to which the women must adopt the man's religion? What about funerals when the larger family is part Christian, part animist? How might a pastor prepare his members and their families for faithful funeral services and burials? Many cultural

questions arise here which are parallel (or possibly don't exist) to situations in the United States. My joy is to work through these questions with the students using the words of Scripture while remaining faithful to our Confessions. For these final year students, many times they are able to draw their own conclusions and provide valuable insight to one another.



...and into the Future

If more than doubling the number of pastors for a church body brings much joy, then we can also consider the joy of ordaining the first pastor for a church body. In April of this year (2017), the African Lutheran Church—Synod of Benin will do just that. Though this young church body has often been attacked by the devil, the Lord is working to preserve the faithful and will be providing them with a well-trained candidate. This church body also hopes to send up to five new students to the CLET in the fall.



And what of our family? Unfortunately, we will not be able to rejoice first-hand with them, but for good reasons. We are scheduled for our Home Service in the United States and are slated to arrive sometime before Holy Week. This is necessary, as **we are expecting our next little child** sometime in mid-May. Therefore, rejoice with us that our pregnancy has been healthy and well to date. We will keep you posted on family news and congregational visits as the time approaches

*For further updates of our family and life in West Africa, check out Robin's blog at [www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com](http://www.wildauersgototogo.blogspot.com)*



Missionary Pastor Micah Wildauer

Theological Educator in Togo on behalf of  
the LCMS % Mount Olive Lutheran  
Church 5327 W. Washington Blvd.

Milwaukee, WI Milwaukee, WI 53208



Meet the Guinean Students of the Lutheran Center of Theological Studies, Dapaong, Togo

**Brief summary of the country and national church**

The country of Guinea is located on the western coast of West Africa and has long been a francophone (Frenchspeaking) country. As there are three African countries with “Guinea” in the name, this one is distinguished by adding the capital city to the name. Thus, the country of these students is known as Guinea—Conakry.

The Lutheran Church of Guinea has around 30 parishes and numerous preaching stations primarily located in the south and southeast. The national president is located in Guékédou. Relatively new, and even against the struggles with Ebola in the region, this church body continues to grow through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. At this time, there are only a handful of ordained pastors to serve these congregations.



[ ] [ ]



**Foromo Lamah Prospère, Age 32**

Foromo was born into a family which held the beliefs and practices of animism among the Guerzé people. Through local education, he achieved his BAC at a young age. In doing so, he earned the respect of many in the village. His wife was also born into a family which practiced animism and the two were married in 2006. When Foromo was 22 years old, his father died followed by his mother 4 years later in 2010. Around time of his mother’s death, he observed that the lives of the Christians in the

village were quite different and offered answers to spiritual matters which he could not find elsewhere. In 2011, without invitation from others, he and his wife started attending a Lutheran Church and were later baptized and confirmed in the faith on the same day in 2014. He has decidedly left behind all local animistic traditions for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They have one

daughter who is 8 years old. His wife's mother remains an animist and they pray for her daily.

His family was not directly affected by the Ebola virus. Many people left the village for another country or other villages further away from the trouble. Some have returned while others remained in their new location. The animists believed and taught that the Ebola virus was caused by spiritual matters. The Christians took refuge in the prayers and the consolation for one another.

There are around 13 recognized congregations in his region along with 10 preaching stations, but not a single ordained pastor. There are 2 men who hold the title of Evangelist, one who is Liberian and who has had some theological formation in Sierra Leone. An evangelist is not considered the same as a pastor, but in the absence of pastors will seek to encourage Christians to remain faithful to the Scriptures. Foromo began his studies at the CLET in the fall of 2016.

There are 7 main languages in Foromo's region, of which he speaks 4 and a part of a 5th. Upon his return, he will be able to reach out to various people groups by speaking their birth language.

### **Kondiano Tamba Alexis, Age 28**

Kondiano and his wife were born into a Lutheran church and baptized as infants among the Kissi people. There are several Lutheran churches in the larger city of Guékédou, but Kondiano will return to a part of Guékédou which does not currently have a Lutheran congregation. His task will be to form a new Lutheran church in conjunction with the national church.

He has served as an evangelist for the last 3 years. He was also congregational president of the young people for a time. He has taught Bible studies on occasion when there was no pastor present.

Kondiano began his studies at the CLET in the fall of 2016.

He finds the Gospel of Matthew to be a great comfort for him and his family, particularly Matthew 28:18-20 where Jesus promises to remain with us always. Kondiano and his wife have 1 boy and 2 girls.

By the grace of God, the Ebola virus did not touch a person in his immediate family, though the



there were times when people were forbidden from paying visits to their neighbors and friends so that the virus would be contained. With the history of this plague in mind, the church has doubled her efforts to proclaim the eternal salvation found only in Jesus Christ.



*Flag of Guinea, red representing the blood of the martyrs who died from slavery and wars, yellow for the sun and natural riches of the land, and green for her vegetation.*

## 2017 CHURCH DIRECTORY OF OFFICERS AND ORGANIZATIONS

### **Pilgrim Ev. Lutheran Church PASTORAL STAFF**

The Rev. Joseph M. Fisher  
The Rev. Christopher L. Raffa

**Office Monday – Thursday 8:00am. – 1:00 pm.**

Senior Pastor  
Associate Pastor

### **CHURCH OFFICERS**

President  
Vice President  
Voters Recording Secretary  
Treasurer  
Financial Secretary

Mr. Jerome Sommer  
Mr. Jim Behrens  
Mrs. Nancy Rosenthal  
Mr. Fred Leffin  
Mrs. Cheryl Virchow

### **ELDERS**

Mr. Dennis Engmann  
Mr. Gary Erdman  
Mr. John Heger  
Mr. Tanner Schmidt  
Mr. Howard Glassel  
Mr. Dave Fellenz  
Mr. Ronald Kabitzke  
Mr. Brian Skrentny

### **TRUSTEES**

Mr. Mark Ringgenberg  
Mr. Dave Boehlke  
Mr. Ron Virchow, Jr.  
Mr. Eric Johanen

### **CHURCH COUNCIL**

Mrs. Judy Frank  
Mrs. Mary Lehtimaki  
Mrs. Suzanne Stadelmayer

### **PARISH EDUCATION**

Sunday School Superintendent  
Board of Education

Mrs. Diane Swanson  
Miss Carolyn McAfee  
Miss Brittany Virchow

### **MUSIC DEPARTMENT**

Organist

Miss Janet Ehlers  
Mrs. Janet Meisenheimer  
Benjamin Grosskreuz  
Samuel Grosskreuz  
Ian Janssen

### **ALTAR GUILD**

President  
Vice President & Secretary  
Treasurer

Miss Carolyn McAfee  
Mrs. Julie Raffa  
Mrs. Bonnie Mowery

**LADIES GUILD /LWML**

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer  
Christian Growth Chairman

Mrs. Ruth Kohler  
Mrs. Julie Raffa  
Mrs. Norma Benz  
Mrs. Beverly Hanson  
Mrs. Beverly Hanson

**QUILTER'S**

The Quilters meet twice a month on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday's,  
contact church office for more information

**DARTBALL**

Gabe Kempf, Captain

**CHURCH OFFICE STAFF**

Mrs. Sarah Spalda, Secretary

**CUSTODIAL STAFF**

Mr. Jim Rosenthal  
Mr. Kevin Hoffman

# Heart FRUIT SALAD

Make this cute, healthy snack for your loved ones on Valentine's Day.



#### What you need:

- Adult help
- Washed fruit (watermelon, cantaloupe, strawberries, grapes)
- Knife and cutting board
- Small heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Bowl and spoon
- Mint leaves (optional)

#### What you do:

1. Slice the watermelon and use the cookie cutter to make heart shapes.
2. Slice the cantaloupe and cut chunks into heart shapes.
3. Remove strawberry stems and cut berries in half. Cut a small V atop each half to form a heart.
4. Cut grapes in half.
5. Place fruit in bowl and stir.
6. Wash and cut the mint. Sprinkle strips on the salad. Enjoy!



## Love your neighbor as yourself

Valentine's Day is the perfect opportunity to live out God's love. How does Jesus say we should treat other people?

*Directions: Find a hidden word in each sentence. For example, "the" is hidden here: (12) "It's Harry's hat he stole." The (12) means the hidden word starts on the 12<sup>th</sup> letter (ignore punctuation). Use the answers to complete Matthew 19:19, NIV.*

(1) You really like ice cream! \_\_\_\_\_

(16) Carly has a really fat hermit crab. \_\_\_\_\_

(21) My favorite animals are moth, ermine and eels. \_\_\_\_\_

(4) "Hello, Vera!" called Joseph. \_\_\_\_\_

(11) When horses neigh, boredom reigns. \_\_\_\_\_

(17) Their daughter, Kara, sat patiently. \_\_\_\_\_

(6) "That's yours, elf!" the fairy yelled. \_\_\_\_\_



"Honor \_\_\_\_\_ and



\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ your

\_\_\_\_\_."

Matthew 19:19, NIV

Answer: "Honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 19:19, NIV