

THE PILGRIM HERALD

May 2017

PILGRIM EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

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MAY: DYING WELL

"Christ is arisen from the grave's dark prison. So let our song exulting rise. Christ with comfort lights our eyes."
[Martin Luther]

We shall never indulge ourselves with romantic pictures of death as a sweet escape. Death invades God's good creation as a part of the curse upon sin. In his Genesis lectures, Luther illuminates the story of Adam and Eve:

"If Adam had obeyed this command [not to eat fruit from the central tree], he would never have died; for death came through sin...For us today it is amazing that there could be a physical life without death and without all the incidentals of death, such as diseases, smallpox, stinking accumulations of fluids in the body, etc. In the state of innocence no part of the body was filthy. There was no stench in excrement, nor were there other execrable things. Everything was most beautiful, without any offense to the organs of sense; and yet there was physical life. Adam ate, he masticated, he digested; and if he had remained as he was, he would have done the other things physical life demands until at last he would have been translated to the spiritual and eternal life." [LW 1:110-111]

Sin resulted in the loss of all of this. Now what would have been that blessed translation has become a nightmare. Its destructive and decaying hand is over everything. In connection with speaking of death, Luther would caution Christians to take care of their bodies properly, finding middle ground between seeking death as an escape to heaven and hanging on to the things of this earth in idolatrous fashion. He warned against carelessness in caring for the body and

other abuse of it. The story of Joseph in prison with the baker and butler elicits this warning from Luther against romanticizing danger and dying:

"We should not bring evils and dangers upon ourselves. But when we are afflicted either by chance or by God's will, then whatever misfortune there is must be borne steadfastly and with great courage, yet not in such a way that we neglect the plans and assistance by which we can be liberated. For it is tempting God to despise the remedies for evils—the remedies offered and shown by God. Thus the body has been given to us by God, not that we should kill it with fasting or vigils, but that we should care for it with food, drink, clothing, sleep, and medicine...We should be prepared for both eventualities: to protect and preserve our life and to meet death with equanimity according to God's good pleasure." [LW 7:113]

Death is also to be recognized as the devil's tool. The devil's diabolical malice causes death. As Luther preaches on 1 Corinthians 15:56, he paints a picture of humanity as prey in the midst of a hunting expedition undertaken by death. He says, "its spear, sword, and blade" deliver "pestilence and misfortune and everything connected with them." There are three warriors that make war against the Christian: law, death, and sin. Luther continues expounding 1 Corinthians 15:56:

"The sting of hell is sin. But the power of sin is the law. Sin is the sting of death. That means that the evil remorse in the heart, as it says, is genuine poison, which kills people. When sin awakens

and remorse comes and says, 'You are a child of death. You are lost and damned,' then the person is a goner without outside help. Death strangles every single human being, using sin to do it...Thus the human creature not only has to die, but also has to die in despair. Therefore that is what hell does. Death and hell would have no power over us if the sting, that is, the remorse, the vicious puppy, the sighing from hell, were not in our hearts."

And here is the promise: sin, death, and the devil, don't get the final word. That belongs to Christ. Luther explains this promise when God confronted Adam and Eve in the garden.

"Right from our mother's womb we begin to die. Through Baptism we are restored to a life of hope, or rather to a hope of life. This is the true life, which is lived before God. Before we come to it, we are in the midst of death. We die and decay in the earth, just as other dead bodies do, as though there were no other life anywhere. Yet we who believe in Christ have the hope that on the Last Day we shall be revived for eternal life. Thus Adam was also revived by this address of the Lord—not perfectly indeed, for the life which he lost he did not yet recover; but he got the hope of that life when he heard that Satan's tyranny was to be crushed." [LW 1:196]

Luther had a confidence in the promise of the resurrection and life eternal because of the work of Christ who minimizes the fear of death. Luther's trust in God's promise of new life for those who had thrown it away by sinning rested on his conviction about the very nature of God as a Creator, a Creator of life. Luther also used

the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds as a confession of the creative power of God and His Word. While preaching on Luke 7:11-17, the raising of the son of the widow of Nain, Luther points out that Jesus raised the young man with a single word, "Arise!" without recourse to any medicines or other methods of healing, just as He had called the universe into existence out of nothing through His Word in Genesis 1. We confess therefore, "God has created me from the earth, so He can awake me from the earth and bring me out of death."

In reading St. Paul, Luther sees him speaking of two victories in Romans 5:12-14. The first victory is that of death which reigns and triumphs over all human children from the first human beings until now. The other victory is the victory of life, which assumes lordship and triumphs over death. Luther describes beautifully this victory with the picture of a duel:

Death is down for the count. It has lost its kingdom, its power, its victory. Indeed it had the upper hand and because of sin the whole world was subjected to it. Every human being had to die. But now it has lost its victory. Against death's kingdom and victory our Lord God, the Lord of Hosts, has gained another victory, the resurrect of the dead in Christ. For a long time death sang, 'Hurray! Triumph! I, death, am king and lord over all human beings. I have the victory and am on top.' But our Lord God has him singing a little song that goes, 'Hurray! Triumph! Life is king and lord over death. Death has lost and is on the bottom.' Previously death had sung, 'Victory! Victory! Hurray! I have won. Here is nothing but death and no life. But God now sings, 'Victory! Victory! Hurray! I have won. Here is nothing

ing but life and no death. Death has been conquered in Christ and has died itself. Life has gained the victory and won.' That is the song that will be sung to us in the resurrection of the dead, when the mortal will put on immortality.

This sense of triumph is combined with a sense of the awful reality of death. This tension creates for Luther his approach to comforting the grieving. Believers react to the death of loved ones with grief that Luther regarded as a natural and justified reaction to the loss of loved ones, which confirmed the goodness of God's gift of life and the evil nature of death. However, confidence in the resurrection of the dead through Christ's own resurrection accompanied and mitigated that grief. The example of the patriarchs could also be put to use. Employing Abraham as such a model in his care for the burial of Sarah, Luther explains that Abraham's sorrow and tears had been recorded not as a bad example but such sorrow and suffering is a result of the love for others that faith produces. Luther recounts Sarah's death to his pupils and recalls the blessings that she had experienced in her lifetime, and sensitively treats Abraham's profound sorrow over the loss of his wife.

Luther also recognized that believers had many questions about death, and on the occasion stories helped to answer them. The baptismal death and resurrection shaped the words Luther used to describe God's blessing of departure from this life to the better life with him, as is evident in Luther's description of God's promise to Jacob when he was about to depart from Egypt. When death comes to God's faithful people, they will have the peace that God gave Abraham, so Luther interprets Genesis 25:8. Luther described death as a most pleasant sleep that holds no dread for those who know that Christ takes them from this life. Luther also knew the

questions Christians ask, and so he poses for his pupils the query, "Where did Abraham go? What does it mean to be gathered to his people?" These words Luther found to be "evidence of the resurrection and future life," a "comfort for all who trust in God." "We have a clear and extensive knowledge about death and life since we are certain that our Savior Christ Jesus is sitting at the right hand of God the Father and is waiting for us when we depart this life. Therefore, when we depart from the living, we go forth to the Guardian of our souls, who receives us into his hands."

Death has haunted mankind since the fall into sin. Christ provided new life through His own resurrection for all who trusted the true God, before Jesus' time as well as afterward. Luther was confident that the patriarchs had trusted in God's deliverance through Messiah. The brief account of Abraham's death and burial in Genesis 25:7-11 gave Luther the occasion to confess that Abraham's hope rested in Christ, whose promise of life in his resurrection extended to all hearers of the Gospel irrespective of time and place.

Death is said to test the human spirit and show its true mettle. Luther's theology faced a test too, as it confronted death. There is in Luther a sober and uncompromising realism that centers his hope of life in the midst of death solely on Christ's death and resurrection. There Abraham, there Luther, there we find hope. That hope we share with the widow of Nain, the royal official who had lost a child, and Lazarus, who had experienced the power of Christ's resurrection. There we find reason to face death with confidence in God's promise of life everlasting.

Realistic about death, Luther also lived in that confident hope of the resurrection of his body because Christ had risen. Though he did not

share his own grief publicly from pulpit or lectern, his deep sorrow over the death of two daughters and of his parents, expressed in letters and at table with his household, indicated his sober and unrelenting estimate of death's curse. He reported to the friends gathered at the table on the demise of Magdalena, his fourteen-year old daughter, that he had prayed, "I love her very much. But if it is your will, dear God, that you take her, I will gladly know she is with you." The note taker reported that "as she lay dying, he asked her, 'Sweet Magdalena, my little daughter, would you rather stay with me, your father, or go to your other father.' Magdalena answered, 'As God wills,' and Luther said, 'You dear sweet daughter.' He added, 'The spirit is strong, but the flesh is weak. I love her so very much.'" He wrote in an epitaph for her that she was born in sin, bound to die as a 'child of death,' but through her death had become "God's guest" because of Christ's death and resurrection. He comforted his wife with the hope of reunion with Magdalena in heaven.

Such a faith shone through Luther's preaching and teaching as well. He was striving to help us all to know how to trust God, endure suffering, praise God and pray to Him, and show God's love to our neighbors. In all that, he presumed, those who heard him, and those who read him, would learn how to die well.

In the Resurrection Bonds of Christ,
Pastor Raffa

Endowment Committee

The Voter's Assembly passed a By-law that establishes an endowment fund for the Pilgrim congregation. Money earned by this fund will eventually be available as grants for special needs and projects. The fund will be managed by a five member committee which will be formed by election at the October voter's meeting. Terms of membership on the first committee will be for 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 years.

At the present time, the Pilgrim Church Council is seeking five members of the congregation to serve on a temporary committee to study the new by-law and to make it operational the day the permanent committee is elected. The immediate need is to get the money (\$120,000) invested at a better rate of interest. The eventual need is to keep the congregation aware of the fund, preparing a call for applications when interest money is available, and selecting recipients who will best serve the purpose of the fund.

At the time of this writing, we have one volunteer and one "maybe". If you are willing to serve. Leave a note in my mailbox or in the office or talk to either pastor.

Jerome A. Sommer
President

JS/ss

Pilgrim Ev. Lutheran Church, Council Minutes,
April 10, 2017.

Meeting was called to order by President Jerome Sommer at 7:02 PM.

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

Pastor Fisher opened with prayer.

President Jerome Sommer asked for any corrections to the last minutes of February 13, 2017. There were no corrections. The minutes were approved as printed.

Elders Report given by Tanner Schmidt: Items discussed were (1) using a processional cross on high holy days. They have had positive feedback. (2) Obtaining a LCMS flag. (3) Pastor and Mrs. Sorenson, St. Andrews, had their baby with medical complications of both mother and baby. The Elders ask permission for our congregation to have a free-will offering to help their situation, eg. Mother's Day Sunday. (4) Pastor Fisher researched the issue of having the Silent Auction and Christmas Sale. He found no problems with scripture. It is not held in the "holy space" and no one is forced to participate. (5) Rev. Wildauer, missionary to Togo, will be the guest preacher on April 27 and 30. A motion was made by Judy Frank and seconded by Suzanne Stadelmayer to pay him an honorarium of \$100 for each of the services preached. Motion was passed unanimously. (This is the missionary that the Ladies Guild supports.)

Trustees Report: Ron Virchow stated that there have been a number of items needing repair. (1) Four slabs of concrete in the sidewalks will be replaced by the City for a cost of approximately \$420. (2) Accident and incident forms are

needed and purchase of a digital camera is needed to document any issues that might occur. (3) Spring Clean up Day is Saturday, May 20th, 8 – 12 noon. (4) The Fire Department Inspection showed a code violation in the kitchen range hood. It will be updated and re-inspected.

Board of Education Report: No report.

Pastors report: Pastor Fisher stated that he received a check for \$250 from a reader of an article that he authored. Pastor Fisher also commended Brittany Virchow on the work and organizing the events that she has been doing with the Youth Group.

Pastor Raffa reported that 7 people were confirmed on Palm Sunday. He has been reviewing the VBS materials from CPH on the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. Both pastors will be going to the Pastors District Conference at the Wisconsin Dells on May 8 – 10, 2017. Ladies Guild will be hosting the Spring Rally on April 25. The guest speaker will be Abby Janssen, Affiliated Health, speaking on Mental Health Issues.

Thrivent sent our church a check for \$1732 as designated by its members.

Unfinished Business: Missions in the Budget. Tabled.

New Business: The Endowment Committee has been established at the Special Voters Meeting. We need to nominate members for election to this committee at the fall voters meeting. Pastor Raffa closed the meeting with prayer.

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Frank

**Board of Elders Meeting Minutes, Pilgrim
Ev. Lutheran Church**

4/3/2017

The meeting began with prayer by Pr. Fisher at 6:34. Present at the meeting were Pr. Fisher, Pr. Raffa, Dave, Brian, Tanner, Ron, Howie, Dennis, Gary, and John.

Pr. Fisher presented a letter directed toward circuit pastors asking for financial aid to the Sorenson family as they cope with a difficult financial situation. (attached) The elders all agreed to this. We will present this to the council.

A question was raised regarding free will offerings.

Pr. Fisher presented his findings regarding fundraising in the context of the Church. (attached) In addition, the LCMS has no position on this matter (though, incidentally, the WELS forbids this). Also, this matter is absent from discussion amongst the Church Fathers. Moreover, a question concerns whether charity to the church becomes easier due to subtle greed in receiving something in return. The pastors and elders emphasize that special fund raising must be over and above the regular, free and cheerful support in response to this. Finally, anything further on this matter must be treated on an individual level and a pastoral application of Law and Gospel, so we find that no further blanket statements may be made.

We've been contacted by Rev. Wildauer, a missionary serving in Togo. He will be guest preaching Apr. 27-30th and leading a study. (The LWML has adopted his missionary program, and we've supported him in the past.) The elders will ask the council if it is financially reasonable to give him a modest honorarium.

There is an opportunity to fundraise at Lambeau Field on Apr. 24th.

Schedules were made through the early service of 5/14.

On May 8-10 the pastors will be at the pastors' conference.

The pastors will look into rubrics for incorporating the Eucharist into the order of Matins owing to its historic, liturgical value and popularity.

They will report back to the elders next month with their conclusions.

John will speak with the trustees regarding security procedures.

The elders continue to reach out and address lapsed members.

A brief question was addressed regarding the endowment fund.

The elders suggest that, in the future, any alcoholic beverages in the fellowship hall be discretely poured into an opaque cup in the kitchen for modesty's sake and to avoid giving offense to any or vexing children.

A meeting remains to be held between the ushers and the counting captains.

The elders still are working to get their pictures posted in the narthex.

The elders would like to have a brat fry across the street next spring.

On Apr. 23rd there will be a meeting immediately after late service concerning the website and the new volunteers we've found.

Questions were answered concerning "Reformation 500" and a processional cross.

Discussion was held concerning the sanctuary light. We note that for roughly \$600 an electric light could be installed, which is a possible solution if the altar guild is not satisfied with the new light. The underlying problems include the dimness of the light and the expense of batteries, both of which cause some grief.

There will be a baptism on the 23rd; Pr.

Sorenson's son was baptised in emergency conditions.

Pr. Raffa reported that all 7 confirmands have passed their examinations. The elders were encouraged to send their respective parishioners congratulatory cards or similar. The elders wish the confirmands blessings as they continue to grow into the Church.

Our book study was postponed owing to the time.

The meeting concluded with prayer by Pastor Raffa at 8:34.

Respectfully submitted,
Tanner Schmidt

8th ANNUAL CHRIST FOR AFRICA- A MISSION AUCTION- On **Saturday, MAY 6, 2017 from 6:00 pm-9:00 pm**, Trinity Lutheran Church-Freistadt (10729 W. Freistadt Rd., in Mequon) will host an auction event to support African missions—*here and abroad*. This evening event, ***Christ for Africa—A Mission Auction***, will include . . .

- A "silent auction" from 6:00-7:45 pm. (Cash, check, credit cards accepted)
- A "voice auction" from 8:00-8:30 pm.
- Appetizers and beverages (*beer, wine & soda*)
- Informational video presentations, raffle opportunities, entertainment and more.

It promises to be a fun, spirit-filled, entertaining evening. We invite you to share this invitation with friends, neighbors, co-workers and family. (We thank the Ozaukee County Chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for funds contributed to this event).

TICKETS—Tickets are \$40.00 per person in advance/\$50 per person at the door. A special *priced* admission ticket for \$25 (Seniors age 55+) and \$10 for students (high school & college). Each admission ticket includes two beverage vouchers (for beer or wine) and grants you access to our appetizer & food serving stations. Soda and water are provided at no charge. Advance purchase tickets may be picked up prior to the event at Trinity during school hours (weekdays 8:00 am to 3:30 pm) or the night of our event at our Will-Call station. Sorry, tickets will not be sent via mail. For more information call- 262-242-2045 or visit the website.

Matching Funds provided by Ozaukee County Chapter of Thrivent for Lutherans.



Sunday School News

We have been having a lot of fun in Sunday School as we continue *Growing in Christ*. The 2016-2017 Sunday School year ends on May 21st. Our remaining lessons include:

Jesus Appears in Galilee
(John 21:1-19)

Jesus Ascends into Heaven
(Acts 1:1-11; Luke 24:44-53)

John's Vision of Heaven
(Revelation 21-22)

We will celebrate summer birthdays on May 21st. Join us that day for our Congregational Picnic & Back Yard Bash.

We have Sunday School classes for students who are 3 years old through those in eighth grade. It would be helpful to receive new student registrations in advance. The 2017-2018 Sunday School year will begin on September 10th at 9:15 a.m. Interested in helping with Sunday School? Please contact Sunday School Superintendent Diane Swanson.

Baptisms

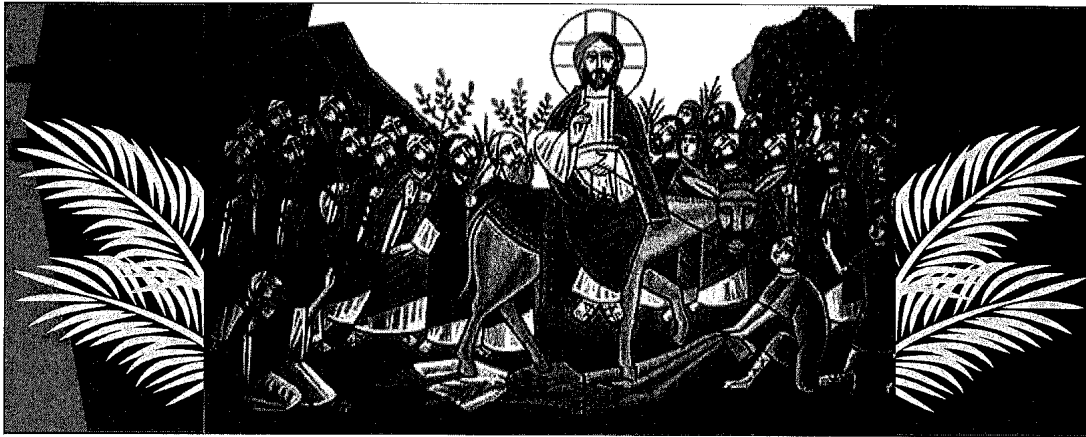
We welcome to the family of God through Holy Baptism, Brayden Phillip Thimmig. Brayden is the son of Ryan and Kristen Thimmig. He was baptized on April 23, 2017.



Spring Clean-up of Pilgrim is going to be held on Saturday May 20 from 8:00 am - 12:00pm.

Hope to see you there.

Please watch the bulletin for further information.



Palm Sunday

Dear Fellow Workers,

“When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, WHO IS THIS?
And the crowds were saying, This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth in Galilee.” Matt. 21:10,11

This Palm Sunday event starts off the Holy Week with a lot of excitement that included the Triumphant March into Jerusalem with the crowds shouting their “Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is He Whom comes in the Name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!” Palm branches, coats and cloaks became the pathway for His beast of burden, a lowly donkey. Children were the focus of much attention as they fully participated.

Is it any wonder that the residents of the city, in seeing this multitude and all the commotion, would ask the inevitable question- “WHO IS THIS?” On Good Friday there would be those who would say – “He’s a nobody,” even though the inscription on the cross would declare: JESUS OF NAZARETHE, KING OF THE JEWS.” Then on Sunday the disciples would realize “He’s really Somebody: He is not here, behold the place where they laid Him. He is Risen, He is risen, indeed.”

There has never been a more exciting week for us to review, relive, reevaluate, reexamine and reread in order to reappraise what was accomplished for us and our salvation by the cross and empty tomb. It’s also a good time to bring you greetings during this most holy of Holy Weeks and share with you some of the events happening on the mission field, as this GREATEST STORY EVER TOLD is being retold in 90 countries of the world in 100 different languages. You are helping to make it happen.

As you very well know, this is the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, mostly commemorating the 95 theses that were nailed to the church door at Wittenberg that really marked the beginning of the Reformation. Other significant events are yet to be celebrated. Lesser known is the fact that this is the 25th anniversary year of LHF but we are foregoing our celebration until September 2018, more the end of our 25th year.

There is much we could draw to your attention but I’m going to limit the report to Germany and South Sudan. It is very possible that the most significant event of the 500th has already happened. Several months ago we released Luther’s *Small Catechism* in the Farsi language. As Luther asks: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN? It means we only repeated what Luther did when he translated the Bible from Latin into German, so that the common person could read it in their heart language.

There is a phenomena taking place in Germany these days. Many immigrants from Iran and Afghanistan are crowding into Germany and many are finding their way into empty Lutheran churches. These Muslims, speakers of Farsi, are now being instructed using a catechism in their own language. Where the Lutheran churches of Germany in places like Leipzig, Wittenberg, and Braunschweig were for many years empty, they now have 500-700 people in worship, 90% of them Iranians and Afghanis. Our Executive Director, Rev. Heise, is in Germany at this moment and will be celebrating all the Holy Week events with these new Lutherans in Germany.

The conversion of Muslims also brings problems as some of these immigrants are being sent back. Among them are Lutheran Christians, who are in danger of being killed once they are forced to go back. Conversion is not an option in the religion of Islam; the only option is "death to the infidels." Please pray for the safety of these new believers in Christ. With your help, we have provided the catechism and are now ready to provide the next volume: *A Child's Garden of Bible Stories*.

And what about events in South Sudan, where there is a shortage of food these days – while LHF is there with an abundance of the Word. Our newsletter has the title THE WORD AT WORK and we often state that THE WORD WORKS. HOW DOES IT WORK? It works in South Sudan and people observe, like the large Anglican Church that has recently been asking to become part of the Ev. Lutheran Church of South Sudan/Sudan. They have seen the books we publish and have observed the seminary program we have been providing, and they have decided to become part of the Lutheran church. Some estimate the Anglican membership to be two million. Training in the catechism has already begun and some of the Anglican pastors are asking to join the seminary classes in the Concordial Lutheran Institute for the Holy Ministry started back in 2001. We do not know where all of this will lead and we can only say THE WORD WORKS.

Back in December of 2015 the ELCSS/S held a convention and elected a new bishop, Rev. Peter Anibati. This was at a time of some upheaval in the church, due to the ineffective leadership of the former bishop. We are pleased with the progress the church is now making with an active bishop and an assistant bishop.

Dr. Bernie Lutz has been back to South Sudan several times in the last year conducting seminars. Next month Dr. & Mrs. Robert Roberts will be in South Sudan and Gambela, Ethiopia for six weeks conducting some additional seminars as we anticipate the start up of the new seminary class late in 2017. We delayed our start in order that the new church leadership would have time to stabilize conditions in the church.

One of the things we are happy about is that the bakery/restaurant enterprise has finally become one of those programs that is successful. Proceeds from this endeavor are being fed back into the church's various programs. The church is using some of those funds to build a new church headquarters in the village of Yambio.

Of course, all of this takes place amidst a lot of tribal and government conflict that drives people out of the country and into refugee camps in Ethiopia and Uganda. At the same time, other endeavors being carried out apart from LHF are primary education projects and a new orphanage being built in Yambio. None of these things could happen had it not been for the presence of LHF in this area the past 20 years.

Our goal this year is to print an additional 160 titles and with these, the total titles printed will be at 1,000. What can we say about this? THE WORD WORKS.

May the hope, joy and peace of Easter be yours at this time and always.

Robert L. Rahn

Rev. Robert Rahn, LHF Founder





- 1- Tammy Fellenz
Daniel Dembski
- 3- Paula Merkel
Madison Phelps
- 5- Nicholas Lewandowski
- 6- Bailee Schmidt
- 7- Marjorie Latall
- 8- Abigail Wiedmeyer
- 9- Susan Awve
- 10- Carole Oesterreich
Rosa Barrett
- 11- Daniel Phelps
- 12- Camilla Kreis
Travis Roell
- 13- Nicholas Doyle
Shirley Jahn
Donna Sommer
- 14- Glenn Zenda
James Guillaume
Courtney Castro
- 15- Patricia Otten
James Sullivan
Brianna Schettler
Judy Frank
- 16- Judy Clark
- 17- Grace Braeger
Greg Voelzke
Brianna Haas
- 18- Tracy Eifert
Brooke Steiner
- 19- Jolene Clark
Ethan Tarvin
Irene Schendel
Nicole Merkel
Richard Torre
Jessica Stange
Kevin Grider
- 20- Don Thill

- Tracy Fezatt
- 22- Randy Frank
Katie Jakubowski
Rebecca Tinlin
- 23- Cassidy Schmidt
- 24- Nan Broege
Laura Hoffman
Kein Smith
- 26- Chandler Stoecker
- 27- Gloria Dengel
- 28- Patrick Gliniecki
Taylor Brown
- 29- Michael Kasten
- 30- Bob Swanson
George Witt
- 31- Dorreen Dembski



- 3- Scott & Rose Densow
Andrew & Rebecca Tinlin
Jeremy & Stephanie Baerenwald
- 4- Dan & Carol Shay
- 5- Richard & Lorrie Reeck
- 6- John & Lynn Wille
- 13- Stephen & Jennifer Jensen
- 14- Mike & Rebecca Loomans
Daniel & Carol Neuman
- 15- Robert & Shirley Mayer
- 19- Todd & Susan Hepner
- 20- Thomas & Laurie Lotz
Stephen & Sarah Spalda
- 21- David & Verlaine Gronowski
- 22- Erv & Ruth Mertz
- 23- James & Denise Spaeth
- 25- Rev. Joseph & Chris Fisher
Dennis & Patricia Engmann
- 26- Jim & Janet Schellinger
- 28- Jacob & Hannah Hand
- 29- Ronald & Kathleen Kabitzke
- 31- Karl & Michelle Bandow

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.

THIS MONTH PLEASE REMEMBER IN YOUR PRAYERS:

Also those struggling with health issues:

Glenn & Pam Zenda, Rev. Peter Kelm, Audrey Vandlik (mother of Carol Heger), Merlin Waechter, Natalie Ruppier, Eric Heuser, Laura Susnik, Barb Soat, Rob Aho Brother in Law of Sarah Spalda, Chris Held, Paul Grosskreuz, Mark Rosenthal, Joyce Talajkowski, Deborah Brathovde, Brooke Steiner, Deborah Sumner, Allen Latall, David Olson, Jeanette Guillaume, Diane Behrens, Karen Haufmann, Olivemae Olson, Donald & Annetta Teske, Nancy Nicholas, Don Meisenheimer, Donna Tessar, Jennifer Jensen, Scot Meisenheimer, Dorothy Young, Don Brockhaus, Wilma Wilson (Mother of Linda Stahl), June Fry, Ruth Mertz, Carolyn Bren, Judy Clark, Dorothy Miller, Marge Mehleis, Mark Selzler, Linda Lukas, Marissa Flanders, Linda Schmidt, George Witt, Tom Jahn, Jenny Vickerman, Donna Sommer, Scott Biskobing, Dave Carey, Laverne Gierach, Travis Winkler, Linda Borneman, Rachel Davis, Brian Vonlender, Glenn Schnabel, Inez Schwoch, Richard Reich, Margene Leffin, Judith Belling, Vanessa Kuehne, Jody Meisenheimer

SAVE THE DATE! AGING & DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER OPEN HOUSE, MAY 17th

WEST BEND, WI – ADRC – The Inside Story – Who are these people and what do they do? Please join us as we celebrate ADRC Month by opening our doors to you! The Aging & Disability Resource Center of Washington County will be hosting an Open House event on Wednesday, May 17, 2017, 12:00 – 2:00 pm. The ADRC is located at 333 E. Washington E. Washington Street, Suite 1000, West Bend, WI 53095. We are at the corner of Washington Street and Indiana Avenue across from the Courthouse. Come meet our knowledgeable staff, tour our suite and hear more about the services we provide.

Whether you are a health care provider, taking care of a family member or friend, an adult with physical or developmental disabilities, someone becoming Medicare eligible or a resident who just wants to know who we are - Learn more about what the Aging & Disability Resource Center is and what services we have to offer.

Treats and refreshments will be provided. There will be a raffle and prizes. ADRC staff will be available to provide information and answer questions.

The mission of the Aging & Disability Resource Center is to empower and assist all seniors, adults with disabilities, and their families by providing services which help them make informed choices, maintain independence, and remain safely in their homes and community.

The Aging & Disability Resource Center of Washington County can help you with information about:

- Assisted Living & Nursing Home Options
- Caregiver Supports
- Housing Options

(Continued on Next Page)

- In-Home Personal Care and Homemaking
- Meals & Nutrition Programs
- Health and Wellness Classes
- Respite Care
- Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid
- Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI)
- Access to publicly funded long-term care programs and services (Family Care, Family Care Partnership and IRIS)
- Determining functional eligibility using the long term care functional screen

- Facilitating financial eligibility determination
- Adult Protective Services
- Transitional Services for Students and Youth
- Support Groups
- Provide linkages to public and private resources
- And Much More...

See you there!

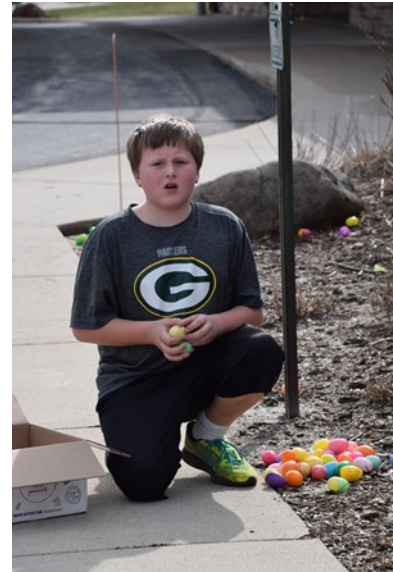


Items Currently Needed for the Food Pantry

- Flour
- Sugar
- Coffee, Instant and Ground
- Kleenex type tissue
- Dish Soap
- Kool-Aid type Drink mixes

Thank you for all the donations in the past and for the future donations.

EASTER EGG HUNT 2017







The Preus Family in the Dominican Republic

¡Feliz Pascua de Resurrección!

Dear Christian friends, supporters, and partners in mission with the Preus family in the Dominican Republic. Happy Easter! Christ Jesus broke the bands of death forever. Amen! God is richly blessing our mission in the Dominican Republic. We are happy to share with you the news and photos of the events that have taken place since my installation in Palmar on Sunday, March 5. May God continue to keep us strong, healthy, and faithful as we press forward on this missionary journey. Thank you and God bless you for everything you do for your missionaries! We appreciate your continued prayers and support.

These past months

It has been a while since you've heard from us, so allow me to fill you at length on some of the latest. My installation on March 5 was a marvelous and exciting occasion. Several pastors from the United States, including Pres. John Wille of the South Wisconsin District, visiting pastors from California and Illinois, as well as the pastors here in the Dominican Republic participated in the service. Over two hundred people, including members, missionary families, and visitors from Palmar and the United States, were in attendance. Pastor Ted Krey, Regional Director of LC-MS in Latin America and the Caribbean, preached a beautiful sermon on Matthew 4:1-7, the text appointed for the First Sunday in Lent. How fitting! Lent is the perfect time to begin assuming the tasks of the ministry in a new place. In the face of the devil's temptations, we who preach God's Word must also believe that the one who has called us is faithful, and He will do it (1 Thess. 5:24).



Our Lutheran pastors
in the DR



Participating pastors and vicars at the installation of Pastor Preus

Over the past two months, I have been working alongside my dear friend, Vicar Idjon Regnier Fritz, nearly every day in Palmar with the goal of strengthening our congregations and encouraging more church attendance. Briefly, here is a list of our weekly tasks:

1. Home visits every Wednesday and Saturday afternoon.
2. Home services Sunday nights.
3. Deaconess Class (History of the Church) every Friday afternoon.
4. Pre-seminary Bible readings on the first Friday of each month.
5. Matins service every Sunday at 8:00am.
6. Divine Service every Wednesday at 7:30pm.
7. New member's class starting next week. We anticipate having three new men from Palmar taking this class.

By God's grace two new little ones have received the blessing of Holy Baptism this month. Samantha on the Fifth Sunday of Lent, and Dylan on Easter Morning. Holy Week (Semana Santa) was filled with daily services and visitations. The week began with a procession at 8:00am on Palm Sunday with palms, songs, and a Matins service in Palmar and then later in Pueblo Neuvo, a neighborhood church in Santiago. That evening, we held a service in home of a family whose 87-year-old mother was dying. From Monday to Thursday of Holy Week at 8:00am, we held Bible classes in Palmar in which we studied the death of Christ: Why did He die? Who killed Him? For whom did He die? For what purpose did He die? The idea was to stimulate meditation on the biblical witness of Jesus and the benefits of His passion. We received fairly good attendance with excellent participation on the part of the congregation. We also had our regular Wednesday evening Divine Service, a Maundy Thursday Service, and a Friday sermon series on "The Seven Words of Christ from the Cross." Saturday permitted some time to write my sermon for Easter morning's Divine Service.



During this week after Holy Week, we have resumed our work of seminary planning. Several members of the missionary team have been working together on this enormous task, which includes establishing contact with future seminarians, securing scholarships, obtaining student visas for students from several Latin American countries, finishing construction on the seminary building, writing a seminary curriculum, planning details pertaining to student life, promoting our seminary plans to friends and leaders throughout Latin America, and much more. My position at the seminary will be professor of dogmatic theology and church history as well as "pastoral coordinator," which is another word for "seminary chaplain." I am thrilled with my position because it enables me to remain a parish pastor and serve as a full-time professor at the same time.

Knowing that work in the Lord's Vineyard has no end this side of glory, we look forward to what lies ahead. And when, by God's grace, we have accomplished everything we have planned, we pray for continued faithfulness, and humility to say: "We are but unprofitable servants. We have only done our duty" (Luke 17:10).

¡Cristo ha resucitado! Ha resucitado de verdad!

The young man sitting in the empty grave told the women, "Do not be frightened; You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified; He is risen, he is not here; Look at the place where they put Him" (Mark 16:6). The resurrection is a historical fact that gives us an incomparable comfort. This simple sentence: "He has risen," is not merely a happy thought that we enjoy for a short time during this earthly life. It is a reality. And the reality of Christ's resurrection proves four things to us.

First, it confirms that Jesus' words are true. He said he would and he did. He said to the Pharisees: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up" (John 2:19) He was referring to his death and resurrection. He made it very clear. He told his disciples again and again that he would go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the scribes, and he would die and rise on the third day (Matthew 16:21). He made it perfectly clear that he would rise. And He did.





A Palm Sunday walk through Palmar before the 8am church service

Second, it confirms that Jesus is the Son of God. Only God can defy death. Only God can stop the course of that all people follow. People die and remain dead. But this man decides not to stay dead, but to rise. And although we were not there in the tomb to see this great wonder with our own eyes, we are blessed by the Holy Spirit to believe what we cannot see. And we confess what Thomas confessed when he saw

his Lord living and said, "My Lord and my God" (John 20:28)!

Third, it confirms that our sins are truly forgiven. If your sins were not forgiven, the women would have found what they were looking for: a corpse. On the other hand, "if Christ did not rise, then our preaching is vain, your faith is vain" (1 Cor. 15:14). But, thank God Jesus was not in the tomb that Sunday morning. Jesus is not in the tomb, and the sins he bore aren't either. He has risen! There are no sins in the sight of God!

Finally, the resurrection of Jesus confirms that we, too, who believe in Jesus, will be raised to eternal life. It is a reality. It is the promise of God grounded in history with real consequences for our future. St. Paul writes: "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now Christ has risen from the dead, and he has become the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep" (I Corinthians 15: 19-20).

Our hope in the resurrection of our bodies will not disappoint us. It is certain. In the resurrection of the dead, we will join the Christians who have gone before us into glory. We will be perfectly conformed to the image of God who is Christ Himself. This will bring us endless and perfect joy. This is the truth, brothers and sisters in Christ. It is true because Jesus said it, and His resurrection confirms that He is the way, the truth, and the life. Amen.



The altar before Easter morning Divine Service

One day in the life of Pastor Preus and family...

(This section was pulled from one of Jenny's Facebook status updates on our mission page, posted March 19th)

Today, we got up early and drove the 20 minutes to church in Palmar Arriba for the 8am service and Bible study, where David conducted the service along with Vicar Idjon and preached a 20 minute sermon (in Spanish). David's Spanish is getting better by the week, and it seems now with writing two sermons a week, it is improving rapidly. After the service, the family walked with a church member through the village to visit her family and we met her father who is ailing with cancer, as well as several of her aunts (tias), cousins (primos), nieces (sobrinas), and nephews (sobrinos). Upon arriving home we found there was a power outage at the house, the apparent cause being a live electrical wire that had broken overnight, swinging precariously by our iron garage gate, so then



[After a Sunday evening service in a villagers home] David began the time-consuming process of arranging for a worker to come and attend to that while the rest of us changed out of church clothes and got back into the car for our weekly grocery shopping trip.



(David needs to help with many of these regular domestic things since I have not yet taken up the challenge of driving here in Santiago!) But instead of the quick turnaround that we were planning, David picked up a conversation with two Jehovah's Witnesses who were walking past our home, and proceeded to evangelize them for about an hour, proving from Scripture that Jesus is God.

After a friendly goodbye and handshake, we finally drove to a very busy store with all seven kids, where we got a quick lunch for the kids and stocked up for a week of meals at home. The electrician arrived soon after we returned home

[Holy week devotional with School Children in Palmar] and within a few hours the cord was secured and power was restored. David is now at an evening service in Palmar and doing a few additional visits with members there. He should be home soon, and we all look forward to relaxing together on our front porch and enjoying the cool, Caribbean, evening mountain breeze before bedtime.

[Reflections from home, by Jennifer]

So much has been happening it's hard to keep it all straight! I guess that is a good thing, as it has been an event-filled couple of months with David's installation as pastor in Palmar Arriba

our continued Spanish and home school studies, a trip to Santo Domingo where we received our residency cards, a busy Holy Week (Semana Santa), and many social gatherings and pastoral visits through it all. We are looking forward to taking a week at the beach which will be our first real trip to enjoy the ocean since arriving in November.



[the kids and new friends in Palmar]



[Family picture after the installation service]

Here are a few thoughts from the older kids as they respond to the question:

What is the most surprising thing you have learned over these past couple of months, here in our new home in Santiago?

Hans: *I'm surprised at how normal life feels here. I thought it would always feel different.*

Rebekah: *It's not as hot as I imagined. Some days are actually quite cool and refreshing. Some days though, it's so hot that I just want to jump in a snowbank!*

Rolf: *I didn't realize how much I had missed Dad having his own church to be a pastor at. I'm glad he is the pastor at Palmar now.*

Lena: *I'm not that surprised by this, but the people here are just really friendly and helpful and kind.*

Soren: *I like that we planted four new palm trees in our yard and I like how they have blades on the branches.*

One other change in our home-life is that our noon meal has become our *main* meal of the day. It will typically consist of beans and rice, plantains, and a little meat. Eating like the locals helps us to keep food costs down, and we have really grown to love the unique flavors of Dominican cuisine.



[Carne y platanos, arroz y habichuelas para comida
Meat and plantains, rice and beans for lunch]

We send our hearty greetings to all of you! How blessed we are to live as Christians in this Easter season! We have a certain hope. God has richly blessed our work here in the Dominican Republic, and we have reason to hope that many more will call on the name of Jesus in true repentance and believe the Easter news. Christ has risen indeed! Alleluia! We invite you to follow "The Preus Family in the Dominican Republic" on Facebook to get updates and photos of our life and work between newsletters. Thank you for your continued thoughts, prayers, and support!

In Christ our Risen Savior,
Pastor David Preus and family

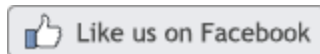
Mailing Address:

Preus family
Apartado 1356
Santiago, Dr
314/445-2350

To support our work financially, you may send a tax deductible gift to:
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Please make checks payable to the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
Or LCMS. Include “Preus—Dominican” in the memo line.
Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website at
[Www.lcms.org/preus](http://www.lcms.org/preus).

Stay Connected





Make this craft to display a bit of springtime year-round!

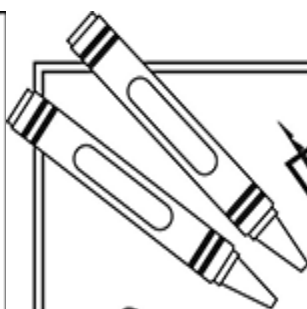
What you need:

- An old shirt
- Tempura paint (brown, dark pink, light pink and white)
- Paintbrush
- Light blue or white construction paper
- A paper plate
- Q-tips
- Paper towels



What you do:

1. Roll up one sleeve and paint your arm and the palm of your hand brown.
2. Lengthwise on the paper, carefully place your painted arm and hand, with fingers spread apart. (This is the tree trunk and branches.)
3. Place the other paint colors on the plate.
4. Using Q-tips, place dots of paint (blossoms!) all over the branches.
5. When dry, display your tree — or give it as a Mother's Day gift.



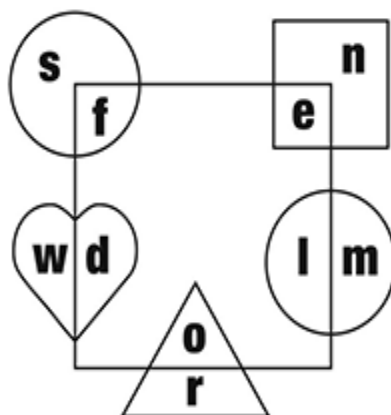
PUZZLE

GOD CARES FOR YOU!

Jesus tells his followers not to worry about their daily needs. What example does he give of God's care for his creation?

Directions:

To complete Luke 12:27 (NIV), match the shapes under each blank with the letter shapes shown to the right.



"Consider how the wild _____
grow. They do not labor or spin.

Yet I tell you, not even _____
in all his splendor was _____
like one of these." Luke 12:27, NIV