



PEAKS AND VALLEYS

DISTRICT NEWS

Our 'virus' is sin

Just as I was sitting down to write this devotional, I went to check a Bible verse and a warning came up stating I needed to contact Apple support immediately. Apple saw something that needed my attention, and the warning was that I had been hit by a virus and my "life," all on this iPad, was corrupted! Those who know me understand I am technically challenged, so this was alarming to say the least.



Rev. Allen Anderson
District President

Have you noticed how life can be full of disappointments, foul-ups and hurtful encounters of various kinds? Life becomes no longer "life." This, my friends, is the result of sin. Sin is like my computer virus. The first goal of a computer virus is to convince the computer that it has no virus. Then the virus corrupts and the computer thinks it is just fine until it is dead and all the functions are lost.

We need to know that the virus called "sin" does the same. It truly does corrupt our behavior and impulses, even causing us to hurt those people in our life we love the most. We can understand why life for so many people feels as if it is a road in the wilderness going nowhere. We too feel guilty and ashamed for the things we do, and unfortunately many times we find ourselves repeating the same things all over again.

Paul himself cried out:

"Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death?"

The answer:

"Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin." **Rom. 7:24-25**

God has removed the deadly virus from us. By His Son, Jesus Christ enters our life and through His death and resurrection makes us new again!

Martin Luther said that the world calls evil good and good evil. Everything is backward without God. Jesus said:

"For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted."

Luke 14:11

Know that Jesus came to give us a clear sense of what truly is good and what is not. The world says that our importance is determined by how much we possess or how skilled we are above others. The world shows that bragging rights are for only those high achievers. But how do you score the real worth of the human spirit?

Once again we need to emphasize that God judges differently than we do. He looks into the soul and sees the emptiness of those whose life has no meaning apart from possessions. He sees hearts broken by guilt and shame. He hears the voice that cries:

"Immediately the father of the child cried out and said, 'I believe; help my unbelief!'" **Mark 9:24**



Yes, God does hear and through His Son, God speaks. In the cross of Jesus, the lost are found, sins are forgiven and the humble are exalted. When all life is done and the end of all days has come, true exaltation will be measured not in what we have but in who has us — Jesus Christ, our Lord!

**In Christ's love and service,
The Rev. Allen Anderson**

"Be still, and know that I am God." **Ps. 46:10**

**April issue
deadline: Feb. 15**

Send news to Jan Hoener:

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Immanuel honors pastor for three decades of service

Immanuel Lutheran Church, Albuquerque, N.M., honored the Rev. Randy Walquist with a retirement luncheon and program on April 17, 2016, at the Marriott Hotel. He served faithfully, along with wife Elaine, for almost 33 years. About 300 people attended, including the Rev. Dr. Charles Blanco, program speaker and associate professor of Theology and Pre-Seminary program director at Concordia University Nebraska; area pastors; members and former members; and the three Walquist children and their spouses, and six grandchildren.

The women of Immanuel bid farewell to their dear friend, Elaine, at a lovely high tea on May 15. The Walquists have since relocated to the Houston area.



Pastor Walquist and wife, Elaine, are joined by their children and grandchildren at Walquist's retirement celebration.

His ministry, as only the third called pastor in Immanuel's 98-year history, emphasized mission support and Christian education in all aspects. He continued the local "Immanuel Hour" broadcast, begun in 1961 by his predecessor, the Rev. Kurt Brink. Additionally, Walquist served terms as circuit counselor and district vice-president.

Paul's encouraging words to the early

believers in Thessalonica aptly describe Immanuel's appreciation for its pastor's long, dedicated ministry:

"We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." **1 Thess. 1:3 NIV**

Submitted by Conley and Delores Defferding

Hope behind bars at Christmas



Ysleta Lutheran Mission (YLM) provides Thursday and Saturday worship services year-round at the El Paso Processing Center for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

At Christmas, however, they are granted permission to bring the full Mariachi San Pablo ensemble to help lead music. In past years, they have gathered men and women together for the bilingual worship service, but this year they quickly ran out of space for all the people

who wished to attend.

Mariachi San Pablo provided music on two different days: Thursday, Dec. 22, for women and Saturday, Dec. 24, for men. Nearly 300 men and women attended the worship services. Prayers were offered for the men and women as they await judgment on immigration status and for their families who are far away, many facing difficult conditions.

Bibles were distributed at each worship service.



Christmas Posadas with Mariachi San Pablo

YLM's Mariachi San Pablo returned to Juarez this December to celebrate Christmas at its mission churches. The traditional posada navideña reenacts the Christmas story of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem and the birth of Jesus. It also offers an opportunity to proclaim Good News through music with processions through the streets of Juarez and to enjoy time together with food and sweets.



Education and the Catechisms

This is a precious year to all Lutherans — the 500th birthday of the beginning of Luther’s blessed discovery of the Gospel and his rebellion related to the beliefs and celebrations of the Roman Catholic Church. This article is part of a monthly series covering topics and historical events leading up to Oct. 31, 1517, the date of the posting of the 95 Theses on the Castle Church door in Wittenberg, Germany.



Luther wrote: “The deplorable condition in which I found religious affairs during a recent visitation of the congregations has impelled me to publish this Catechism...the people have no knowledge of...Christian doctrine, and many of the pastors are ignorant and incompetent teachers.” The “deplorable conditions” motivated Luther to write the Large and Small Catechisms and publish them in 1529.

What Luther Says

Luther recognized the need for urgent educational improvement and reform. There were no public-school systems. Teaching was often limited to the children of the wealthy. Luther wrote that for Christian education to flourish, parents must nurture their offspring in the teachings of the Bible. Luther knew that, in order to carry out this responsibility, suitable materials were needed.

Luther wrote the Catechism because of

- (1) the absence of any effective learning tools available to preachers and teachers, and
- (2) the absence of any readable texts available for the German parents.

In Luther’s view, education is crucial to the advancement of the Gospel, and Scripture is the basis of education for believers saved only by God’s grace through faith. As he said: “I am afraid

that the schools will prove the very gates of hell, unless they diligently labor in explaining the Holy Scriptures and engraving them in the heart of the youth.”

The LCMS’ Doctrinal Position

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) believes that Christian education is crucial to the advancement of the Gospel and that Scripture is the basis of Christian education for believers saved only by God’s grace through faith.

The LCMS uses the Catechism as its basic Christian educational text because Luther based the Catechism on the foundation of Christ’s inspired Word, the Bible. The Catechism is a summary of the truths of God’s Word and the basis for the doctrine and the beliefs of the LCMS. The LCMS believes that the Catechism should also be used as a prayer book for individuals and families in their meditations each day.

The Catechism is used in confirmation instruction because it has the six “wheels” (Ten Commandments, Lord’s Supper, Lord’s Prayer, Holy Baptism, Holy Communion and the Apostles’ Creed) that enable the doctrine of Lutheranism to be moved into the hearts and minds of all people.

The LCMS is a respected leader in the field of Christian education. It places great emphasis on instruction in the Word. It recognizes this as one of the most effective ways of reaching out boldly with the Gospel.

The LCMS and the Rocky Mountain District (RMD) support many Lutheran educational institutions. As of 2013, there were 1,285 early-childhood centers (which are not connected with an elementary school), 880 elementary schools, 90 junior-senior high schools, nine universities and two seminaries. Within the RMD in 2015, there were 36 early-childhood centers, 26 early-childhood and elementary schools and one high school.

The Event

The Reformation was about education as much as it was about reforming the church. Luther’s education, ultimately a doctor of theology degree, began with his father’s determination to see Martin succeed.

As a result of Luther’s insistence on “faith alone” and after years of controversy, he observed the religious chaos in the churches of Saxony, Germany, was because of the lack of Christian education.

Next month’s topic:
Luther and the Bible

DISTRICT CALLS/CHANGES

Calls accepted

- ▶ **The Rev. Tyrel Bramwell**, Christ, Murray, Utah, to St. Mark's, Ferndale, Calif.
- ▶ **The Rev. Gerald Harrow**, SMP, Redeemer, Fort Collins, Colo., to St. Paul, The Grove, Texas
- ▶ **The Rev. Michael Redeker**, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, to Lutheran Church of Messiah, Grand Junction, Colo.
- ▶ **The Rev. Jonathan Schultz**, Our Savior, Vernal, Utah, to Mount Calvary, Estes Park, Colo.



- ▶ **The Rev. Andrew Farhat**, St. Paul, Roseburg, Ore., to St. John's, Denver, Colo., Highland Campus, associate pastor
- ▶ **The Rev. Todd Frusti**, Trinity, Davison, Mich., to Faith, Buena Vista, Colo.
- ▶ **The Rev. Joel Haak**, Trinity, Rochester, Minn., to Messiah, Longmont, Colo.

Calls declined

- ▶ **The Rev. Jacob Dickerhoff**, candidate status, Erie, Colo., to Beautiful Savior, Anchorage, Alaska; and Gethsemane, Northglenn, Colo.

Calls extended

- ▶ Trinity, Gallup, N.M., to **the Rev. Christopher Gillespie**, Grace, Dyer, Ind.

Change of status

- ▶ **The Rev. Steven Hein**, Shepherd of the Springs, Colo. Springs, Colo., to emeritus

- ▶ **The Rev. Armenio Pineros**, Trinity, Sterling, Colo., to emeritus

Reinstated to roster

- ▶ **The Rev. Robert Macina**, Pampa, Texas, to candidate status

Removed/resigned from roster

- ▶ **The Rev. Kevin Krohn**, Ruidoso, N.M.
- ▶ **Joanna Joy Whittington** (Lutz), Lovington, N.M.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FEBRUARY

11 SOAR active adult seminar, Bethlehem, Lakewood, Colo.

MARCH

Nurturing the Faith 2018
6 New Mexico **7** North Denver
9 South Denver **10** Utah

Seminary choir tour to make stops in district

The Laudamus men's choir from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will begin its spring tour in February and make six stops in four states through mid-March, including Colorado and New Mexico.

Laudamus is a select choir of seminarians preparing for full-time service as pastors in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). Under the direction of James Marriott, the seminary's director of musical arts, the choir delights in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ through music.

While on tour, the group will sing for worship services and special concerts at LCMS churches. This year's tour program includes selections from composers such as Brahms, Faure, Hogan, Poulenc, Josquin Des Pres, David von Kampen and more.

The itinerary for the Laudamus 2017 tour includes:

- ▶ Sunday, Feb. 19, 7:30 p.m., Redeemer Lutheran Church, Fort Collins, Colo.
- ▶ Monday, Feb. 20, 7 p.m., Mount Olive Lutheran Church, Aurora, Colo.
- ▶ Tuesday, Feb. 21, 7 p.m. Trinity Lutheran Church and School, Pueblo, Colo.
- ▶ Wednesday, Feb. 22, 7 p.m. Christ Lutheran Church, Albuquerque, N.M.

A seminary recruiter will be available at each performance to talk with prospective students and anyone interested in church work opportunities, provide information on the admissions process and answer questions about Concordia Seminary.

For more information on the Laudamus spring tour, visit csl.edu/laudamus, call 314-505-7118 or email marriottj@csl.edu.

We must play!

What does play have to do with social, emotional and academic learning? The Denver Area Lutheran Early Childhood Administrators (DALECA) will explore the answer to this question at their upcoming workshop on Feb. 11 at Zion in Brighton, Colo.

Together participants will discover the cognitive pathway that allows play to teach. They also will "play" a bit themselves and learn how to assess play in a way that helps to teach parents of its essential benefits.

The guest speaker will be Kimberly Marxhausen, adjunct professor of Education at Nebraska Wesleyan University.

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