

## The Believer and the Resurrection

**Matthew 28:5-10** The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. <sup>6</sup> He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. <sup>7</sup> Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him.' Now I have told you." <sup>8</sup> So the women hurried away from the tomb, afraid yet filled with joy, and ran to tell his disciples. <sup>9</sup> Suddenly Jesus met them. "Greetings," he said. They came to him, clasped his feet and worshiped him. <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to them, "Do not be afraid. Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee; there they will see me."

Try to place yourself in the sandals of the women who first came to the tomb on the morning of the Resurrection. The stone had been rolled away, two angels were there to greet them, and the body of Jesus was no longer there. We do not have to guess at their reaction. The Bible tells us that they were **"afraid yet filled with joy."** They were filled with fear and joy at the same time.

The fear they experienced was godly fear. They stood in complete awe of God, standing in the presence of his holiness, realizing they were sinful people on whom the sovereign Lord had shown mercy, and on whom he had imparted the blessings of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. The empty tomb could mean nothing less than that God had kept his promise. His Son, the Messiah, had redeemed them as he promised. In this act of God, the Resurrection, he fulfilled his words through the psalmist: **Psalms 130:3-4 If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup> But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.** Yes, we would have expected the psalmist to say, "but there is forgiveness with you, therefore you are praised!" Or, "...therefore we give you thanks!" But that is not what he says. "With you there is forgiveness, therefore you are *feared*. God is feared because we are brought to the realization that this is the Creator and Judge of all, and that he is now pardoning us, weak and undeserving though we are. We stand in complete awe and wonder of his grace. It is no wonder that Solomon, twelve times over in the book of Proverbs, refers to the fear of the LORD and also reminds us that it is the beginning of wisdom.

But coupled with fear was also joy. For the women who came to the tomb that morning there was joy, complete joy. Jesus had risen! He fulfilled his promises, as the angels were quick to remind the women. The women were overjoyed, not simply because they were told Jesus was still alive, but more than that, he had risen from death! His resurrection also meant life and resurrection for all who believed on his name. It meant their sins were forgiven. It meant they had peace with God. It meant eternal life in heaven.

May that also be our reaction as we leave the empty tomb and walk onward through this earthly life as pilgrims who make our way through this world. Look back at the empty tomb, and thus fix your hearts and eyes heavenward, knowing that our hope and comfort is found in the risen Christ. We are filled with fear and at the same time joy because Jesus Christ is risen from death. The Easter experience is something we carry with us throughout the year and are reminded that because Jesus lives, we too shall live.

In Christ,  
Pastor Jeffrey A. Bovee

## From Your Staff Minister

Thank you to all who prepared and served the meals during Lent and to the ushers who filled in for the mid-week services. Thank you to those who preached the Word for the services of Lent.

During April we will have the Examination Service for our Catechumens. This is a chance for those who haven't studied a Catechism recently to hone their memories on what we Confessional Lutherans were taught in our youth.

"They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they entered, they did not find the body of the Lord Jesus. While they were wondering about this, suddenly two men in clothes that gleamed like lightning stood beside them. In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!' (Lk 24:2-6a)

Kelly Emde

## Our Synod at Work

### WELS ANNUAL REPORT: CALLED TO PROCLAIM

As mentioned in our last column, we are going to be focusing during the next few months on the WELS Annual Report to Members/2018. This month we are going to be highlighting information that is contained in the section "Called to Proclaim." This section talks about our World Missions and our Home Missions.

World Missions is reaching out with the saving message of the gospel in 50 countries. That number continues to grow due to exploratory evangelism in new mission fields and an increased online media presence. World Missions plants churches, trains national pastors, and mentors fellow Lutheran Christians. Here are some interesting facts about World Missions:

They are celebrating 125 years of mission work in 2018 and are in fellowship with 105,465 Lutherans around the world.

They have 44 missionaries in the field conducting outreach and training national pastors.

They support 13 teachers and more than 60 laypeople as they reach out to children and adults with the gospel.

They are exploring outreach opportunities in 14 prospective new mission fields and are reaching more than 840,000 people in Latin America with the gospel through the Academia Cristo Facebook page.

They continue to partner with Multi-Language Publications, which has printed more than 2.9 million items in more than 52 languages.

Home Missions is called to proclaim God's Word to those in the United States and English-speaking North America. It also supports campus ministry, cross-cultural ministries, and a variety of other mission activities. In 2017, the Board for Home Missions authorized four new mission starts and three ministry enhancements:

Shepherd of the Valley in Westminster, CO. has started a second campus in a growing western suburb of Denver after a year's work of evangelism and outreach.

Living Savior in Asheville, NC, started a daughter congregation in Hendersonville, NC, which started worship services with more than 100 in attendance.

Living Hope Lutheran Church is in Chattanooga, TN. The church was started in May, 2017, and has been blessed with strong success in initial outreach efforts.

Grace in Charlotte, NC is the mother congregation helping a church in Huntersville get started with 20 core members providing support.

Mt. Lebanon in Milwaukee, WI., is currently calling a second pastor to allow the campus pastor more time to spend with prospective families.

A second bilingual pastor was called to Immanuel in Waukegan, IL, to enhance its Hispanic ministry.

New lay members have allowed King of Kings in Little Rock, AR. to restart with a full-time pastor at the helm.

The surrounding community is growing and Lord-willing, so too, will the ministry.

Next month we will continue to review the 2018 Annual Report.

Gerald Woodley

## OWLS

The Minnesota District OWLS will hold their annual spring rally at Martin Luther College on Monday, April 16. Registration and fellowship will be held in the Chapel of the Christ from 9:00 to 10:20.

The speakers for the day will be Pastor Timothy Redfield and his wife Megan, from Trinity, Belle Plaine, MN, and Pastor Peter Georgson, Executive Director of Lutherans for Life. Pastor Redfield and his wife will share their experiences as they face the challenges and joys in bringing up their child, Libby, who is blind.

The agenda will also include an MLC report as well as national OWLS' news from Executive Director, John Paulson and Convention Coordinator, Werner Lemke. There will be a registration fee of \$10 which includes lunch in the cafeteria. Additional details will be sent in March. Please contact Dale Markgraf if you plan to attend at demarkgraf@gmail.com or 507-354-2735 (e-mail preferred).

## Council Digest

The Church Council met on March 20. With a number of individuals missing because of illness and scheduling conflicts, an abbreviated agenda was addressed. A summary of reports and action from the meeting not reported elsewhere in the *Fortress* follows:

Rev. Robert Guenther continues to consider a call to serve as administrative associate pastor at St. John's. Pastor Guenther currently serves Grace Lutheran Church in Kenai, Alaska. He and his wife Rebecca are the parents of four children, ages 14, 12, 7 and 5. A decision is anticipated shortly after Easter.

After sorting through a number of complications and various options, the council reiterated its decision to purchase the 601 S. Washington Street property from a member family of St. John's at a price not to exceed \$115,900. The purchase of the home meets the long term goals of our master site plan as a space for additional parking. In the short term, the home can serve as a location for additional Sunday school rooms or a transitional parsonage for a second pastor. Special gifts of almost \$20,000 for the project have been received and will be applied directly to the purchase of the home along with internal funds made available for that purpose. No borrowing of funds will be necessary. Completion of the sale is anticipated within the next month.

Administrative Teacher James Dretske is currently disabled because of a back condition. Since his return to the classroom this school year is uncertain, the Board of Elders, which traditionally serves our congregation as a called worker care committee, was asked to make sure his family's needs are being addressed during the time of the disability. Please pray that God would restore Mr. Dretske's health and allow him to return to the classroom in the near future.

Gerald Woodley has been appointed as lay delegate from St. John's to the Minnesota District Convention on June 12-14 at Martin Luther College. We thank Mr. Woodley for serving our congregation and district by attending those meetings on our behalf.

The Board of Youth and Education reported that it is planning a 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in ministry recognition for Teacher Laura Balza on Sunday, May 27. Details will be announced as plans are finalized.

The audit committee of Wayne Wels and Jason Enter examined the congregation's financial records found everything to be in good order. The council voted to accept the report and its accompanying recommendations. The report will be shared with the voters' assembly in April for approval. We thank Messrs. Wels and Enter for their volunteer efforts.

The next Church Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 17, at 7:00 p.m.

The next quarterly voters' meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, April 24, at 7:00 p.m.

Steven R. Thiesfeldt,  
Congregational Chairman

## Library News

A recent addition to the religious section of the library is called "Know the Bible Now." It was written by various authors and tells the story of God's plan of salvation through 120 stories found in the Old and New Testament. It also includes summaries of the various books of the Bible and many visual illustrations and visual aids. It would provide a comprehensive understanding of the Bible for someone new to the faith and a good review for those who have already heard these stories.

The Practical Theology section of the library has all of the books published by Northwestern Publishing House called the People's Bible Teachings. They were written especially for lay people by pastors and professors of our synod. They explain the main doctrinal teachings of the Bible. Some of the titles in this series are: *Church Fellowship*, *Marriage and Family*, *Civil Government*, *End Times*, *Predestination*, and *Prayer*.

Also included in this section of the library are "Prepared to Answer" and "More Prepared to Answer" by Mark Paustian. They were written to help Christians witness to their unbelieving friends or those who are struggling believers. Some of the topics included are why bad things happen, abortion, miracles, and evidence of Jesus' resurrection from the dead. Please take the time to examine what is offered in this section of the library.

If you are looking for something specific in the library, use the listing in the binder on the credenza or ask for assistance.

Eleanor Runke  
Church Librarian

# Reflections

Women of the area are invited to the annual Reflections Service which will be held on Sunday, April 8th from 2:30 - 4 pm. We will gather at St. John's Lutheran Church for dessert, fellowship, and a candlelight service of songs, readings, and prayers. Our theme will be "Living to Share." More details and the sign-up sheets are found in the narthex or by e-mailing [kgrunwald@splnewulm.org](mailto:kgrunwald@splnewulm.org).

Ladies interested in setting a table are encouraged to contact Mary or Karen or sign up at church.

Please invite friends and sign-up by Monday, April 2nd.

Questions, please contact Mary Hussman at 354-3001 or Karen Grunwald at 507-217-6229.

## Archives

### Miscellany

This month's article again recalls items from service bulletins, newsletters, and council and congregational minutes from 60, 50, 25, 10, and 1 years ago. Hope you will find them interesting. Comments, questions, suggestions and corrections are welcome at [kruegerh@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:kruegerh@mlc-wels.edu).

**1958, Pastor was Rollin Reim.** In February, nineteen teams of two took the 1957 Yearbook to the homes of members to discuss it with them "in order more perfectly to unify our interests and efforts in Christ's name."

**1968, Pastor was Frederick Nitz.** The 1968 Year Book includes a detailed report on the 1968 St. John's Dartball team. Interest regarding forming a St. John's softball team was solicited in June.

**1993, Pastor was David Kolander; David Zabel was Director of Christian Education.** Communion procedure was changed and discussed during the year. It was decided to celebrate communion in both services and using both individual and common cups and serving at the floor level to avoid making communicants walk up the steps to the altar. A rail was constructed and new communion ware was purchased.

**2008, Pastors were Jeffrey Bovee and Wayne Laitinen; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske.** In connection with the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary the March Fortress noted some significant items from 1947-48. St. John's began with a resolution of St. Paul's: "St. Paul's congregation favors the founding of another congregation of the Wisconsin Synod in our city." Prof. Martin Albrecht of Dr. Martin Luther College served as a temporary pastor. The first service was held in St. Paul's School on October 19, 1947 with 81 in attendance. The present property was purchased soon after and groundbreaking was held on May 19, 1948.

**2017, Pastor was Jeffrey Bovee; Administrative Teacher was James Dretske.** Staff minister Michael Martens, a native of New Ulm, began serving his internship at St. John's for the spring semester.

To be continued.

Bob Krueger

## 2018 WELS Nursing Convention

The 2018 WELSNA Spring Conference will be held in New Ulm, MN at Martin Luther College on **Saturday, April 21st**. Our theme is "Christ Centered Nursing Care Across the Spectrum of Life". Our theme Bible passage is Psalm 73:26 "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." We will be encouraged and enriched by five wonderful Christian speakers.

Pastor Ben Sadler will be our devotional leader for the Spring Conference. He is the chairman of WELS Freedom for the Captives, a ministry with the goal of "Helping the Body of Christ serve as a support system for child abuse survivors." (Freedomforthecaptives.com)

Please prayerfully consider coming to our spring conference. You will be nurtured, encouraged, enriched, learn of mission opportunities and enjoy the fellowship of WELS/ELS nurses.

Watch for more details to be posted soon. We hope to see you there. For more information on WELSNA go to [www.welsnurses.net](http://www.welsnurses.net).

## St. Paul's Dartball Team

The St. Paul's Twins men's dartball team completed their 2017-2018 season by winning the championship of the WELS Dartball League tournament on March 18 at St. Peter Lutheran Church, St. Peter.

The team opened the tournament with 9-8 win over the Courtland/Brighton Cubs, followed by a 15-6 victory over St. Peter. After losing to St. Mark's, West Mankato by a score of 16-6, the Twins faced the Trinity A's, Nicollet and defeated them 9-5.

The 3-1 record put the Twins in first place, winning their 5th tournament championship in the last ten years. In regular season play the Twins ended in second place to the A's with a 22-14 record. St. John's members, Larry Vogel and Mark Micheel, play on the Twins team.

### 2017-2018 St. Paul's Twins Dartball Team

Players front from left: Myron Fluegge, Larry Vogel, Dave Koester, Manager Jim Schaefer, and Doug Rolloff. Back: Corey Schaefer, Adam Slander, Dan Rolloff, Mark Micheel, and John Fluegge. Absent are Bob Ahlers and Larry Luepke.

