

# ST. PETER COMMUNICATOR

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October 2023

## From the desk of Pastor Peterson

### “In All Things”

Dear fellow redeemed; we certainly live in interesting times don't we. If you turn on the news, read a newspaper, or browse the internet, sometimes you just want to shake your head at what you read and hear. Yet, life goes on and so does God's work in our lives. The title for this article is “In All Things”, meaning in all things we need the Lord. Yes, we need the Lord.

I am constantly reminded of my need for the Lord. I confess to all who are reading this that even though I am a pastor, I need the Lord daily, actually each minute. I am a desperate sinner in needs of God grace, mercy, and forgiveness. The popular Christian artist, Steve Green put out a song a while back called “People Need the Lord.” The song talks about people that are broken, at the end of their ropes, and have nowhere to turn. That song describes us at times in our lives. We need the Lord every day and every minute and dare I say, every second. All of us have suffered through traumatic times, broken dreams, and maybe some of you are wondering why this world is so rough, tough, and cruel. The answer is because of sin. Sin destroys. Sin leaves us destitute. Sin robs us of our hope. Sin cannot be overcome by our own efforts because it is so deeply rooted in us. This undeniable fact of sin is why people need the Lord in all things.

You might be in a situation that may involve financial matters, health matters, issues with family and friends. Maybe life is just getting overwhelming, and it seems that you are drowning in despair and the light at the end of the tunnel is not an end, but a freight train of destruction headed your way. The undeniable fact is that we all need the Lord. So, the question is where do we find Jesus? The answer is not us finding Him, but Him finding us. That is what shepherds do, they find their lost sheep and gather them in the safety of a sheep pen. Look at it this way, the church is the sheep pen. The Lord calls us and brings us to safety. He brings us to His house to show us how much He loves us and how much we need Him and each other. In Luke chapter 15, verses 3-7 we have Jesus telling the parable of how the shepherd takes care of his sheep. **Luke 15:3-7** <sup>3</sup> **So he told them this parable:** <sup>4</sup> **“What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if he has lost one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the open country, and go after the one that is lost, until he finds it?”** <sup>5</sup> **And when he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders, rejoicing.** <sup>6</sup> **And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and his neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’** <sup>7</sup> **Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.**

In our Lutheran Worship of the Divine Service, we hear and receive God's Word to us. We preach the Law because people need to be reminded that they are sinners and are not deceived. God's Word tells us in **Romans 3:23** <sup>23</sup> **for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.** And in **1 John 1:8-10** <sup>8</sup> **If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** <sup>9</sup> **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just forgives us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** <sup>10</sup> **If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his Word is not in us.** Here we have the bad news is that we are sinners, but the good news the Gospel is that God who is faithful and just forgives us our sin. We need to hear this in church and be reminded daily. Thus, we need the Lord. In our Divine Service, we know that we are that one sheep that is lost, and the Lord is bringing us to safety.

In our Divine Service, we not only hear and receive the forgiveness of sins, but we also receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion, the true body and blood, in, with, and under the bread and the wine for the forgiveness of sins. We are also blessed to witness baptisms, both infants and adults, where God makes them His own. Thus, we need the Lord. In our worship service we also need to have the opportunity to worship with each other and to fellowship with each other. That is what God desires for us, to be together around the Word and the Sacraments. In Ephesians 2:4-10, we have the assurance of God that He is with us in all things and how

great His mercy <sup>4</sup> But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, <sup>9</sup> not a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

God is with us in all things, for that we can be grateful and have that eternal hope in the forgiveness of sin, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen



## SUMMER IN PUERTO RICO

The missionary field can sometimes be a lonely place, you are surrounded by so many people, however many of those people only know you from what is on the surface. Often it is hard expressing yourself in your second language as you are still learning, making it easier to stay on the surface in those relationships. My goal this summer was to dig deeper and make more meaningful connections with the church members while I was the only missionary stationed in Mayaguez. With the Maita family on home service in the United States, I took on more congregational responsibility at Iglesia Luterana, Principe de Paz, along with continuing in the roles that I occupy daily. I coordinated meals, lead crafts and printed bible study materials for our Wednesday fellowship nights. I oversaw the opening and closing of the church on Sundays. Along with a variety of smaller tasks. The new

tasks for the summer provided a wonderful opportunity to build stronger relationship with the church members. I was the contact person and the coordinator between the congregation members and the visiting missionary pastors from Ponce. On a few occasions this summer, I was also able to have Spanish speaking coffee dates with a member of the congregation in Mayagüez, who happens to be a Spanish teacher. This was a perfect opportunity to get to know her better and get more practice speaking Spanish. I pray that we can continue these. I was also able to have lunch with other members of our churches as well throughout the summer. I am very thankful for my missionary colleagues who are with me in Puerto Rico and the ways I can stay connected with those who live far away. I am also thankful for the opportunity to be lonely this summer to grow and build relationships with others in my community. We are truly never alone. God is always with us. In times where that is hard to see remember what came at the end of the Great Commission “And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age” Matthew 28:20b

## HOME SERVICE UPDATE:

The needs on the Puerto Rico mission field have changed. In order to continue the Lord's work that you generously support is to postpone my home-service/reconnect until the fall of 2024.

I recognize this is a significant amount of time from my last reconnect. I would love to aid in shortening that time by offering to meet with you on Zoom or by creating a video to share updates with your LWML groups or congregations. Please let me know if this is something you are interested in while I eagerly await to visit in person next fall.

I greatly appreciate every one of you!

Your Sister in Christ, Ashley Lehr



Letter From the Editor



## Digging In: Archaeology & Apologetics

by Roy S. Askins

St. Peter's first epistle encourages us to "always [be] prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). The Greek word for "making a defense" is *apologia*, or "apologetics" in English. Thus, we get the Christian discipline of apologetics, or making a defense of the faith.

Consider St. Peter's audience when he wrote that encouragement. They were "grieved by various trials" (1 Peter 1:6) and lived "as sojourners and exiles" among the nations (1 Peter 2:11). He tells them to submit to authorities, even the emperor (1 Peter 2:13). He tells them that servants — slaves in the New Testament sense — were to remain subject to their masters and to endure even unjust suffering. Why? Because Christ suffered first, "leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps" (1 Peter 2:18–21). If they were to suffer for righteousness' sake, St. Peter assures them, "you will be blessed" (1 Peter 3:14).

In other words, St. Peter's audience does not seem to have much of a reason for hope. And surely they do not seem to have any reason to defend that hope to others. Yet, St. Peter knows that their defense of the hope they have in Jesus Christ may indeed be the tool by which the Holy Spirit brings faith.

Apologetics does not mean arguing someone into the faith; only the Holy Spirit bestows faith when and where it pleases Him. But the Holy Spirit does

use our witness to Christ's work to clear roadblocks and prepare the path for faith. That is the apologetic task.

For many years, archaeology has formed an important part of Christian apologetics. As David Adams points out, archaeology neither proves the Bible nor argues someone into faith. The raw facts archaeologists uncover require interpretation. But for those who enjoy the archaeological details, it provides a vast mine of data for enriching our understanding of God's Word and world.

This issue takes up the twin tasks of apologetics and archaeology. We have the privilege of including the writing of Paul Maier, noted Lutheran writer and historian. David Adams, seminary professor and archaeologist, expounds on the limits of archaeology. Professor and archaeologist Mark Meehl walks us through the nitty-gritty of an archaeological dig. Finally, Sarah Reinsel discusses the manuscript traditions of the New Testament and what it means for us and our English Bibles today.

I hope you enjoy digging into this issue as much as I did.

Ready to make a defense,

Roy S. Askins

Managing Editor, *The Lutheran Witness*

Letter From the President



## A Compelling Truth

by Matthew Harrison

In December 1869, Johann Fackler, a student of theology at Erlangen, wrote to C.F.W. Walther and told him that things were going to hell in a

handbasket in the Bavarian territorial church. Walther, however, encouraged Fackler to stay so long as the church maintained a public orthodox confession. Despite Walther's encouragement, Fackler made his way to St. Louis and ended up living with Walther.

A few years ago, I received an invitation to preach at the 150th anniversary of a congregation in Corcoran, Minn. Reading the history of the congregation, I discovered that Fackler had been pastor there, and when I visited, I saw his cane, a gift given to him by his confirmation students for the 50th anniversary of his ordination.

After I preached, an elderly woman, just about 100 years old at the time, walked up to me. She said, "Pastor Fackler baptized me. I knew him. He would come to my family's home. We loved him." I was stunned: That's one degree of separation between me and a guy who lived in Walther's home.

This woman would have gladly and ably corrected anyone who spoke incorrectly about Pastor Fackler. She could have, conceivably, recalled stories told about Walther from as early as 1869.

Now, consider the first century Christians. In A.D. 100, there were people alive who had seen Jesus, people who had known Jesus! I spoke with William Weinrich from Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, about this. It is significant that no one from within the Christian community who had seen Jesus — and there were many as St. Paul mentioned over 500 in 1 Corinthians — disputed the content of the Gospels, or Jesus' teachings, miracles, death or resurrection.

The Gospels were written from A.D. 50 to 90. And no one, not even St. Paul's opponents in the church in Galatia or otherwise, contested the Gospel. Not a single record from that time exists to contradict the Gospel accounts.

Knowing this does not persuade anyone to become a Christian. But it should give us a bit of courage to believe the seemingly outlandish

claims of the Bible: that a man who died as a criminal was in fact God and that He rose from the dead. And it should give us confidence to make a defense of these things to those around us.

That defense — an apologetic — is the subject of this issue.

Paul Maier, who has written a large collection of essays and books about Christianity and apologetics, encourages us in this issue to do a better job of being ready to make a defense for the hope that is in us (1 Peter 3:15).

But we are not just trying to win a debate or turn the tide of the culture in our favor. We are saying to the world, "We have something good and true and beautiful." The beauty of the Gospel is just as compelling as its truth. We have recently witnessed the particular intensity with which our culture rejects God the Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier. The culture pours out vitriol on those who confess Christ as God and Lord. And into this morass of wickedness and ugliness, the church has an opportunity to speak of eternal truth and beauty.

Some years ago, I visited the Vatican Museum and thought about the Christians who lived in Nero's house. St. Paul writes about them in Philippians 4:22, "All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household." I saw a magnificent porphyry (it means "purple" in Greek) stone bath. It was probably some 15 feet across, and Nero had commissioned its creation for his over-the-top "Golden House." You can explore the ruins in Rome to this day.

What evil and debauchery must those Christians have had to witness and suffer. They couldn't just quit. They were slaves. And yet they had to serve an emperor known not only for his cruelty, but also for murdering his mother, wife and other family members. His reign is widely recognized as one of the most corrupt in Roman history. It is said he burned down a portion of Rome to make room for his Golden House, and then blamed the fire on Christians, burning them at the stake in punishment.



And yet, the Christians in Nero's household joyously desired that St. Paul greet the Christians in Philippi for them. It is as though they were saying, "You have friends in high places! Be encouraged. The Gospel of the free forgiveness of all sins in the blood of Jesus Christ and His blessed resurrection is incredible. Not even Caesar can stop it in his own household!"

Lutherans in America — you readers of this very magazine — face similar scenes of wickedness in your workplaces, media and more. Your consciences face an onslaught. Many of you face hostility at work or school for holding to the sacred Word of God. You wonder whether you should stay in a certain position or job, or whether you are compromising your biblical convictions by staying. You wonder how to address the issues that divide you from your family and friends. And so much more.

Should the church compromise on sexuality issues to reach out to more people? Can I invest my money in compromised institutions? Are there any that are not? Can I support my sports team even though they celebrate and promote actions diametrically opposed to natural law, the Ten Commandments and the Word of God?

Some of the answers to your questions are clear; others less so. But what does remain clear is the church's opportunity to speak the truth of God's Word, to have "here I stand" moments before the world.

This also is a type of apologetics, a defense of the hope that we have, that we as the church need to be ready to give an answer. Let us ever keep this hope before our eyes: the hope of Christ and Him crucified. This summer's convention focused us as a church on this message. It focused us on the bloody, pierced and crucified Christ, for there we see the hope of all the world. Pierced for our transgressions. And raised for our justification.

—Pastor Harrison



The September issue of *The Lutheran Witness* digs in to the relationship between archaeology and apologetics, discussing the Christian task of defending the faith and the vast mine of data that archaeology provides for enriching our understanding of God's Word.

- **From the President:** A Compelling Truth
- **From the Editor:** Digging In: Archaeology & Apologetics

Features:

- **Jesus and Apologetics:** A fresh look at an old conversation — *Paul L. Maier*
- **The Word of the Lord Endures Forever:** The New Testament manuscript tradition — *Sarah Reinsel*
- **The Art of Archaeology:** The nitty-gritty details of an archaeological dig — *Mark Meehl*
- **The Limits of Archaeology:** What it can't tell us — *David Adams*

Departments:

- **Snippets:** News from around the LCMS and the world
- **Lutheran Education:** The Teacher's Gifts
- **Set Apart to Serve:** Appreciating Our Church Workers
- **From the CTCR:** The Concept of Fellowship
- **Searching Scripture:** All Is Rubbish Compared to Christ

## From the mission field: Partners in the Lord's song



The Rev. Dr. David Somers, missionary-at-large for Lutheran Church—Canada, leads a workshop session on French liturgical resources in Montréal, Quebec, in May. The workshop included an introduction to a hymnal recently developed for francophone Africa, *Liturgies et Cantiques Luthériens: Édition Africaine*. (David Saar)

Cantor Phillip A. Magness is a sacred music educator for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) Office of International Mission. One of his projects as a missionary has been the production of *Édition Africaine* (ÉA), a hymnal to serve francophone singers and congregations, particularly in Africa.

In a recent newsletter, Magness writes, “Producing a hymnal requires a team — and the quality of the hymnal depends on the abilities and dedication of that team. *Édition Africaine* had particular needs, and the Lord graciously provided for them through the humble service of the Rev. Dr. David Saar and the Rev. Dr. David Somers.

“Pastors Saar and Somers, a.k.a. ‘The Two Davids,’ were the leadership team for *Liturgies et Cantiques Luthériens* (LCL), the parent hymnal of *Édition Africaine*, and so I was extremely thankful when they got on board with this project. They caught the vision at our first meeting early in 2020, via Zoom, and faithfully followed through in all their commitments to the project.

“Pastor Saar did all the engraving for the hymnal, guaranteeing that it would align with the look of *LCL*, which he also engraved. He also found several of the new psalm antiphons that we included in *ÉA*. Pastor Somers, who is most fluent in French, handled the copyrights for us and hosted the introductory conference in Montréal.

“We also thank Concordia Publishing House for giving us permission to use the *Lutheran Service Book/LCL* artwork, and Lutheran Heritage Foundation—Africa for publishing the book. Indeed, we are better together!”

## The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod LCMS Stewardship Ministry Newsletter Article – October 2023

### It's in the Way that You Use It

Consider the humble baseball bat. It is a simple tool designed for a complex task. The batter needs a tool that can consistently deliver force to a small ball which may be thrown at over 100 miles per hour, but which might also come slanting across the plate as a slow curve. For a game like this, the founders of baseball had to redesign the old cricket bat, which is more of a flat paddle. The tool had to fit the job.

But even a specially-designed tool can be used for a different purpose. It turns out that some years ago in England, the home of cricket, baseball bats suddenly started selling like hotcakes. What were folks across the pond doing with all those baseball bats? Using them as clubs in riots!

A tool can be used, and it can be misused. It's all in the way that you use it.

The same is true with the things of God. The Second Commandment states that we should “not misuse the name of the Lord.” In the Small Catechism, Luther goes on to tell us exactly what this misuse is, as well as the proper use:

“We should fear and love God so that we do not curse, swear, use satanic arts, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.” (SC I)

The Lord has given us His name: He has placed it upon us in Holy Baptism and He has invited us to

pray to Him as our Father. In this sense, the Lord's name is something for us to use. We should not misuse it ... and we should not fail to use it. The Pharisees of old were so afraid of misusing the name of God that they decided to simply never say the name of God (YHWH, Jehovah) at all! This non-use is just as bad as misuse. The Lord gives His gifts for our use.

A Christian steward is one who is called to use all of God's gifts for His purposes. This includes things like the Name of God, the Sacraments and the Word, and it also includes things like our family and friends, our talents and skills, our money and resources. Everything that God has given to you, He has given to you so that you may be blessed to use it for His kingdom.

It's all in the way that you use it!

– LCMS Stewardship Ministry:  
[lcms.org/stewardship](http://lcms.org/stewardship)



#### October

- 6 Brynn DuPrey
- 8 Terry Hackbarth  
Dennis DuPrey
- 10 Adam Hernke  
Corey Manders
- 11 George Schroeder
- 12 Oliver Ott
- 13 Silas Ott
- 14 Eva Kamps  
Minda Hernke  
Brecken Roehrig
- 18 Brad Diener  
Nelson Teinert, Jr.
- 20 Emily Gustafson
- 21 Joshua Schaffer
- 24 David Zuelke
- 25 Jeff Voigt  
Dan Koffarnus
- 27 Cheri Koffarnus
- 29 Joshua Hein  
Justin Hein
- 30 Connie Tennesen  
Jerilyn Fochs
- 31 Debbie Brantmeier

#### HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

- 1<sup>st</sup> Jonathon & Crysta Ladwig
- 10<sup>th</sup> Mark & Pam Menge  
Wes & Amanda Pompa
- 17<sup>th</sup> Dennis & Grace Roehrig
- 18<sup>th</sup> Richard & Jennifer Vander Sande
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Benjamin & Jody Behnke
- 25<sup>th</sup> David & Debbie Brantmeier
- 26<sup>th</sup> Harold & Judy Paulson  
Dan & Linda Schroeder
- 30<sup>th</sup> Dan & Connie Diener
- 31<sup>st</sup> Dan & Cindy Koffarnus

### *Our Response to His Love*

	9-10-23	9-03-23	8-27-23	8-20-23
General Fund	\$2262	\$1434	\$1861	\$1054
Missions		\$20	\$5	
Totals	\$2262	\$1454	\$1866	\$1054

# October 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1 18<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>4</b>  4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>  10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton	<b>7</b>
<b>8 19<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) Fellowship 9:30 Sunday School  <b>LWML Sunday</b>	<b>9</b>  <b>Columbus Day</b>	<b>10</b>  1:00p W.I.M. Meeting & Bible Study 3:00p Decorate (Fall)  7:00p Bible Study	<b>11</b>  4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>  10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton	<b>14</b>
<b>15 20<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>18</b>  4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>  10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton	<b>21</b>  <b>LWML Zone 10 Fall Rally @ St. Peter</b>
<b>22 21<sup>st</sup> Sunday after Pentecost</b> <i>Green</i>  8:30 Divine Service (NC) Voters Meeting 9:30 Sunday School	<b>23</b>  Newsletter Articles Due	<b>24</b>  7:00p Bible Study	<b>25</b>  4:00p Confirmation Class @ St. Luke	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>  10:00 Bible Study @ Terra Verde, Chilton	<b>28</b>
<b>29 Reformation Sunday</b> <i>Red</i>  8:30 Divine Service 9:30 Sunday School	<b>30</b>	<b>31 Reformation Day</b>  7:00p Bible Study			<b>Altar Guild:</b> Cheri Koffarnus, Bonnie Ott, Bonnie Teinert	

Divine Services marked (NC) will not have Holy Communion