

ST. JOHN'S NEWSLETTER

ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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BUILT ON CHRIST OUR CORNERSTONE

Vol. 127, No. 10
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From the Pastor:

“A Solid Foundation: Part Three, Reliability of the Gospel Authors”¹

Last month we showed how the Gospel documents (and the rest of the New Testament for that matter) stand up under legal scrutiny, showing them to be reliable in the sense of reflecting what was written by the original author. However, the skeptic is not done yet. They say, and this is true, “The fact that the documents are reliable *as documents* does not, in and of itself, mean that what is written on them is true.” In other words, how do we know that what Matthew, Mark, Luke and John wrote is *the truth*? This is an important question, since these authors record critical things that we base our faith upon, including the teachings and miracles of Jesus, His brutal crucifixion, and His bodily resurrection and ascension. So we have what the Gospel authors wrote, *but can we trust what they wrote?*

First, it must be remembered that testimony is assumed to be truthful unless it can be impeached or proven false under cross-examination. This is true in law and in everyday life, as those who assume that everyone is always lying are rightly considered to be paranoid! Therefore, when attacking the reliability of the Gospel writers, the burden of proof is rightly *on the skeptic*. So the question is, “Can he/she meet this burden of proof?”

First, let’s consider the authors. Do they seem to be the type who would “bend the truth” in order to put themselves or their pet cause in the best possible light? A careful reading of the Gospels quickly dispels this. First, the authors go out of their way to claim that what they are writing is not fable but fact, giving historical referents for dating purposes. Thus if what they wrote was false, it would have been immediately disproved, especially with so many people who were hostile to their message present, including those in power. Second, they are fully honest, showing the faults, failures and misunderstandings of themselves and their associates.² Both of these facts debunk the “clever liar” concept.

In addition, considering the claim that they had *reason* to lie to enhance their own standing in the early church and/or gain economic benefits, again just consider the facts of history. Those who willingly testified of

¹ Again I acknowledge that my primary source for this newsletter series is *The Defense Never Rests*, 2nd Ed. by Craig A. Parton, Concordia Publishing House. This book addresses three main topics: 1) The call to broad-based Evangelicals to the Biblical/theological depth and richness of confessional Lutheranism, 2) The call to Lutherans to be better prepared to defend the Christian faith and the Lutheran expression of it, and 3) the call to religious liberals and secularists to honestly evaluate the Christian Gospel. This book, written by a professional trial lawyer and practicing Christian apologist, is hard-hitting in its arguments and yet written with a lay audience in mind, being only 164 pages long.

² Consider just these few examples, Matt 16:5ff.; Mark 10:35-54; Luke 9:37-40; John 7:5.

their faith before earthly authorities consistently lost property, honor and even life. One has only to consider that if earthly benefits were their goal, they were *absolute fools*. (So foolish, that you wonder how they could have come up with such an elaborate concept in the first place!) In addition, the apostles without fail gave up their wealth *for others*, and do not hoard it. And in the end, since all the apostles but one were martyred for their faith,³ how likely is it that they would have willingly died such horrific deaths for a lie they concocted, and one that gave them *little to no earthly benefits* on top of it?⁴ Sometimes *common sense* is all that is needed to see the blindness of skepticism!

But what about defects in their *testimony*? It is often claimed how they don't give identical accounts of all the events they record. Surely this must prove the testimony as defective, right? Actually, it only *strengthens* the case for them.

While it is true that each author highlights certain things, and that they will tell the same event from a different perspective, sometimes giving additional details, they are *not* contradictory.⁵ “In fact, the presence of four different *but not inconsistent* versions of events is one of the strongest evidentiary factors in favor of the integrity of the Gospel writers. Identical statements by witnesses is one of the surest signs of collusion.”⁶ Thus, *in a court of law*, the so-called differences in the Gospels are a stronger confirmation to their authenticity than if they matched up perfectly word for word.

Finally, we must examine if outside evidence supports or hurts the Gospel testimony. Parton writes, “In fact, archaeology has been the best friend Christianity could hope to have, and its results repeatedly are found to vindicate New Testament geography, chronology, and history.”⁷ As an example, it was claimed that since there was no secular evidence that a man name Pontius Pilate ever existed, he obviously didn't (since you *can't* trust the Gospel documents!). But then in 1961, the “Pilate inscription” was found, a pagan reference to Pontius Pilate, and once more the Gospels were shown to be accurate.

In conclusion, speaking solely from what would be accepted as testimony in a court of law, *the Gospels pass the test*. In the words of Parton, “We may confidently conclude that the Gospel writers withstand the most rigorous cross-examination, not only as to their character but also as to the content of their testimony.”⁸ We recognize that our “blind faith” in the Bible (as we are accused of having) is shown to stand up to solid critical thinking and, therefore, is not be blind at all. In fact, it is those who attack the Bible that are showing themselves to be “*blind skeptics*.”

My hope and prayer is that this small delving over the last three articles into the realm of Christian apologetics (defense of the faith) has strengthened your convictions in the Bible truly being the Word of God as it claims to be and will give you more confidence in your witnessing to those who have not been brought to this conviction yet. If you are interested in studying apologetics deeper, I would strongly encourage you to read Parton's book from which I've been drawing. I also have other recommendations if you're interested.

³ John was not martyred, but his brother James was the first apostle to die (Acts 12:2; consider that Stephen was already martyred for his faith). In addition to losing his brother and friends/fellow apostles, he also saw other faithful believers die and was himself exiled to a penal colony on the island of Patmos for a period of time due to his Christian witness (Rev 1:9).

⁴ While one could argue that later Christians could have died believing a lie, the apostles were the guys who would have made the lie up! If this were true, they would have willingly been executed in horrific ways for a known lie, a lie that if given up would have allowed them back into “normal” life and society. The most reasonable explanation is that they died because they knew they were dying for the truth!

⁵ For example, Luke and John let us know that two angels were at the empty tomb, Matthew and Mark focus on the one who spoke, but never make the claim that there was only one present. Different yes, but not contradictory.

⁶ Parton, *The Defense Never Rests*, p. 112, emphasis original.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 113.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

In our (very real and true!) risen Lord's service,

Pastor Nerud

APOLOGETICS: Strawman and bandwagon fallacies⁹

In the beginning was the Word (*Logos Λόγος*), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God
(**John 1:1**).

Followers of Jesus Christ, called the *Logos* in John 1, should be logical in their arguments. Those who don't follow Him have no such restrictions. This shows in the many logical fallacies used against biblical creation. My previous two editorials have discussed the importance of correct logic and refuting fallacies.¹⁰ This article begins a new series on logical fallacies: how to spot and refute them.

Straw Man (and Weak Man) Fallacies

Often, evolutionists don't refute the actual creationist position but instead refute a silly position held by virtually no-one. This fallacy is often called 'knocking down a straw man.' A related fallacy, 'weak man', refutes an argument made by *less informed* people but long ago rejected by the leading proponents. For example, the biblical creationist position is that God created different kinds, each with the capacity for lots of variation. Saying that creationists deny that species change, i.e. believe in *fixity of species*, would be a straw man.

Sometimes the straw man is not stated explicitly but implicitly in an argument. E.g. claiming that since breeders have made many varieties of dogs, evolution is true and biblical creation is false. But this is not countering the biblical creationist argument. In fact, creationists both before and after Darwin *rejected* fixity of species. Fixity of species was actually pushed by Darwin's mentor Charles Lyell, the leading promoter of long-age geology.

We have seen 'weak man' fallacies when an evolutionist tries to disprove creation by arguing against a real person who used an unsound argument. For example, 'Women have one more rib than men.' Some people really do believe this. However, CMI long ago pointed out why this is false (see CMI's list in <https://creation.com/dontuse>). In short: amputees don't have amputee children, and the Bible doesn't imply otherwise.

The straw man argument can work both ways. E.g., there is certainly a place for showing up evolutionary frauds and retractions, especially to undermine their dogmatic certainty. However, CMI articles, books, and talks tend not to major on these. Rather, we want to show that even the evolutionist's *strongest* case fails badly.

Bandwagon Fallacy

In 19th-century USA, a bandwagon was a wagon that carried a circus band, which attracted a crowd. Politicians decided to use bandwagons in their campaigns. The term 'jump on the bandwagon' became commonly used for joining a popular political campaign. Later, the term was extended to mean following the crowd or majority in any opinion. The fallacy is also called *appeal to the majority* or *appeal to the people* (in Latin: *Argumentum ad populum*). However, the majority is not always right.

Probably, the reason most people provide for believing in evolution is 'most scientists are evolutionists'. But if you asked most of these scientists *why* they believe in evolution, most will *also* respond, 'because most scientists believe it.' In the vast majority of scientific work, evolution plays no part. Another reason is that many scientists are just unaware of the strong case for creation. Or else, the only arguments they have heard are straw man or weak man fallacies.

However, the minority can be wrong too. We should avoid the reverse fallacy of rejecting something just because a majority believes it. E.g. 'Are you going to be a mindless conformist sheeple following the crowd?' At CMI, we are *pro-Bible*, not anti-establishment for the sake of it.¹¹

⁹ By Jonathan Sarfati. <https://creation.com/strawman-and-bandwagon-fallacies>

¹⁰ These can be found in *Creation Magazine*, available from Creation Ministries International (CMI).

¹¹ This is an important point as some Christians seem to mistakenly think that everything said by an authority is to be rejected for the sake of faith and loyalty to Christ and the Bible. And so conspiracy theories thrive where God's gift of reason should not permit them, including such ideas as "flat earth," "we never landed on the moon," and other such provably false claims.

Conclusion

Since Jesus is the *Logos*, as imitators of Christ, we should be logical. It also helps us spot many of the fallacies that evolutionists commit. Knowing that should make us more confident and accurate when we witness about the *Logos*.

A LOOK at the LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

Last month, we continued our reading of XXVIII, Church Authority, confessing the Scriptural truth that the real authority of pastors is that of the Word of God. This month we continue this reading, declaring that bishops/pastors have no right or authority to decree or introduce any rite or ceremony in the Church that in any way goes against the Gospel (again, their authority is that of the Word, not over the Word).

Augsburg Confession Article XXVIII: Church Authority, 30-38¹²

There is also a dispute about whether or not bishops, or pastors, have the right to introduce ceremonies in the Church, and to make laws about meats, holy days, and grades, that is, orders of ministers, and so on. Those who say that the bishops do have this right refer to this testimony of Christ in John 16:12-13, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth." They also refer to the examples of the apostles, who commanded that Christians abstain from blood and from things strangled (Acts 15:[20,] 29). They refer to the Sabbath day as having been changed into the Lord's Day, contrary to the Decalog, as they understand it. In fact, they make more of the supposed change of the Sabbath day than any other example they can think of. They say that the Church's authority is so great, it has even done away with one of the Ten Commandments.

But on this question, for our part (as we have shown earlier) we teach that bishops have no authority to decree anything against the Gospel. The Canonical Laws teach the same thing (Dist. IX). It is against Scripture to establish or require the observance of any traditions for the purpose of making satisfaction for sins, or to merit grace and righteousness. When we try to merit justification by observing such things, we cause great harm to the glory of Christ's merit.¹³ It is quite clear that by such beliefs, traditions have almost multiplied to an infinite degree in the Church, while at the same time, the doctrine about faith and the righteousness through faith has been suppressed. Gradually more holy days were made, fasts appointed, new ceremonies and services in honor of saints instituted. Those responsible for such things thought that by these works they were meriting grace. So the Penitential Canons increased. We still see some traces of this in the satisfactions.¹⁴



ALL SAINTS DAY

We will again be displaying the crosses for our loved ones who have joined the Church Triumphant on All Saints' Day. If you have a 'name' you wish included this year, please add it to the listing on the table outside the coat room.

¹² From *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions*, Paul McCain, Ed. CPH, 2006. Due to the length of this article, it is being broken into smaller sections.

¹³ While it is true that a pastor should never *force* any new ceremony upon a congregation, that is not the main point of this article. Its thrust deals with those ceremonies that are *against the Gospel* by teaching that through doing such ceremonies a person's sin, or its consequences, is in any way, no matter how small, paid for or removed, or that God's grace is somehow merited (earned) by the performance of the ceremony (i.e. God owes us something due to our doing it).

¹⁴ *Satisfactions* are the third part of the Roman Sacrament of Penance. First, you confess your sins to the priest. Second, he absolves (forgives) you of the *eternal* consequences of your sins. Third, he commands certain satisfactions to be performed which help to remove at least some of the *temporal* consequences of your sins, with whatever remained to be paid for in Purgatory.

OFFICE INFORMATIONS



Please call the office or Pastor when someone is ill, hospitalized, or homebound or you desire private communion.

- Please use this email to contact the office: churchoffice@stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Website address – www.stjohnsgeneseo.org
- Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/St.Johns.Geneseo/>
- All Sunday services are ‘Live’ streamed at 10am and posted to our church website the following day.
- All newsletter articles need to be into the office no later than the 15th of each month.
- Bulletin announcements must be to Terri by Wednesday morning each week.

WORKDAY

The Trustees have scheduled a Workday for Saturday, October 12th, 8am-12pm. This will be a fall cleaning up of landscape around the building. Your help would be greatly appreciated. A rain date is set for October 19th. Contact Larry Kane or Randy Rasmussen if you have questions.



OCTOBER ANNIVERSARIES

4 Daniel/Fern Kulpa (2014) - 10 yr
7 Tim/Kristy Wolfe (2006) – 18 yrs
21 Dennis/Cheryl Loenser (1971) - 53 yrs
21 Preston/Sabrina Smith (2000) - 24 yrs

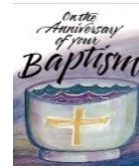


22 Joel/Lynne Daniels (2005) - 19 yrs
26 Joel/Susan Goetz (1991) – 33 yrs
30 Roy/Linda White (1992) - 32 yrs

OCTOBER BAPTISMS

1 Gracelyn Kulpa
4 Cheryl Loenser
4 Barb Miller
11 Alec Davila
11 Robert Wolfe

14 Jason Dahl
14 Cassandra Kulpa (Fern)
16 Tim Wolfe
19 Jessi Ague
19 Rachael Himmelman



22 Jacob Johnson
23 Carl Freeman
23 Madison Winchell
24 Gary Post
31 Nicole Werling

OCTOBER BIRTHDAYS

2 Nancy Wickwire
4 Lynne Daniels
5 Carl Freeman
5 Dakota Grant
5 Sandra Kane
6 Fred Magerkurth
9 Russell Blank Jr



9 John Erdman
10 Zane Roberts
12 Rev Timothy Nerud
14 Jonathan Barry
17 Nicole Magerkurth
18 Keagan Daniels
20 Kurt Gehn

25 Kristen Wolfe
26 Nathaniel Helg
27 Carson Mitchell
28 Alan Eastburn
28 Katherine Wolfe

A DOLLAR FOR MISSIONS

The current Dollar for Missions project is for replacement of furnaces at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb, which is expected to cost some \$25,000. The Student Center was built 55 years ago. Equipment replacement like this is important so the Gospel can continue to be proclaimed and students can go on being reached there for years into the future. For more information visit <https://www.cidlcms.org/ministry-dfm-current-project.html>. (Thank you to those at St. John's who consistently support the work of Missions on the District and Synodical level. You are a blessing!)



CHRISTIAN LIVING

“The Singing Church”

Lutherans have historically been called “the singing church.” There is no doubt that music has been a major component in the theology and practice of the Lutheran church. Luther once remarked about music, “We can mention only one point, namely, that next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise.”¹⁵ Music has a power and purpose that cannot be understated in our worship and the life of the congregation.



But music does more than touch the emotions. Music is a vehicle that carries both the musician and the hearer deeper into connection with the truth of the Scriptures. This is true of the most complex Bach chorale and even the simplest of songs like “Jesus Loves Me, This I Know.” Each musical selection within the church shapes the thoughts, minds and faith of the people who experience them.

This is also true of stewardship hymns. We are currently considering the verses of “Forgive Us, Lord, for Shallow Thankfulness” (LSB 788) as it shapes our understanding and practice of stewardship. This month we take a deeper dive into verse two:

Teach us to thank you, Lord, for love and grace
For life and vision, for a purpose clear,
For Christ Your Son, and for each human face
that shows Your message ever new and near.

The stanza begins by touching on the truth of the Law. Thankfulness is not a natural posture for fallen humanity. For sinners curved in upon themselves, thankfulness for love and grace is something that must be taught. We are those who hoard and clutch. Our confession of our shallow thankfulness highlights the need for us to learn thankfulness to God.

Thankfulness also points to what we are stewards of: love and grace! All the things we have traditionally called stewardship aren’t actual stewardship. Rather, what matters is how we steward the one, true and only treasure: the love and grace of God revealed to us in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So, all stewardship is stewardship of the Gospel! How can we gaze at the cross and empty tomb and not be thankful?

The LCMS defines stewardship as “the free and joyous activity of God’s family — the church — in managing life’s resources for His purposes.” God’s love and mercy give us a clear purpose as we live out our Baptism and practice this joyous stewardship. All we are, all we have entrusted to us, and all we are called to do is to connect others with the love and mercy of God revealed in Jesus!

The faithful steward sings with lips and life of this love and mercy that is ever new and near. In the Scriptures. In the Lord’s House. At the Lord’s Table. This is where our stewardship song starts and ends. Our family, our co-workers and classmates, and our world need to hear this song!

PRAYER GROUP (CHAIN)



All are invited to participate either by becoming an email prayer warrior or asking for prayers. Prayer warriors receive requested prayers from the Pastor via email which then can be used as they pray throughout the day. Those desiring prayers can make a request to the Pastor. This is a blessing to those requesting prayers and those praying for our brothers/sisters in need of prayers.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

Brad & Michele Barry - transferred to St. John’s Lutheran Church, Plymouth WI
Paul, Teri, Kristin, Madeline, Lincoln Mosher – transferred to Concordia Lutheran Church, Geneseo IL
Dawn Daebelliehn – Apostolic Christian Home of Roanoke, 1102 West Randolph St., Roanoke, IL 61561,
309-218-2522

¹⁵ Martin Luther, “Preface to Georg Rhau’s Symphoniae iucundae,” in Luther’s Works, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Helmut T. Lehmann, and Christopher Boyd Brown, vol. 53 (Philadelphia and St. Louis: Fortress and Concordia Publishing House, 1955–), 321–322.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Our Infrequent Attendees –pray the Holy Spirit bring them to understand their need to be in regular worship in church and we as brothers and sisters in Christ would reach out to them.

Our LWML Chapter– that God would continue to bless their work.

Sunday school – pray the Holy Spirit would direct and guide the students to a better understanding of God’s love and mercy in Jesus Christ and that all parents would be diligent in bringing their children each Sunday.

Youth – pray the Holy Spirit would provide the means to work with our youth to keep them faithful to their confirmation promises. Bless and increase their numbers.

Elderly/Homebound - pray that this congregation would continually remember our Elderly and Shut-ins and minister to their special needs.

Confirmation Students – pray that they will be eager to study, learn and grow in the teachings of the Lutheran church and their faith. May they see this is the beginning of a life lived for Jesus.



REMEMBERING THOSE IN NEED!

ST. JOHN’S FAMILY—O Lord, You are the great Physician of soul and body. We pray that You would show mercy these members of St. John’s:

Elizabeth Bjork

Betty Firch

Jessica Johnson

Linda Lundquist

Paula Chapa

Arlyn Helke

Aaron Raschke

Marilyn Woods

Joyce DeFauw

Lynne Johnson

Drew Schillinger

Carolyn Wildermuth

Dawn Daebelliehn

Brandon & Shaeli Streeks & family (Adopted Seminarian)

Don Eggers (son of friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jodie Martin (daughter of Gary/Darla Johns)

Shandel Loenser

Don Lutz (husband of an LWML friend of Liz Neumann)

Justin Rittenhouse (grandson of John/Nancy Wickwire)

Carol Eggers (friend of Marilyn Woods)

Jon/Anita Clausing (missionaries in Kenya)

Marty Cavato (cousin of Mary Jo Gehn)

Ron Powell (friend of Brad Gehn)

Ellen Bauer (grandmother of Joel Werling)

Gary Kilstom (friend of Brad Gehn)

Paul Werner (brother of Dan Werner)

Kenneth Cullison (son of Kevin/Stacie Rahn)

Please remember to call the church office if you are needing prayer. Also let us know when we can remove your name because your health has improved and you are living a regular life. We love to give thanks to God for His healing just as we send Him our requests.)

MILITARY – We pray for those serving in our military and their families:

Mandy/Richard Davila (daughter/son-in-law of Linda Aper)

Casey Powers Jr. (step son of Lisa Powers)

Luke/Nicole Thompson (son/daughter-in-law of John/Kindra Thompson)

Brittany Loenser (daughter of Gabe Loenser)

Karl Flynn (son of Mr/Mrs Paul Flynn)

Rylie Hallendorff (grand-daughter of Carolyn & Dan Werner)



NEWS YOU CAN USE!

October 2024

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. Romans 15:13 (ESV)

It is very easy for us to worry about things. We worry about our health and the health of our family. We worry about paying the bills. We worry if we have saved enough for retirement. We worry about the direction our country is headed. We worry about the future. We do indeed spend a lot of our time and energy worrying about things. Worrying can cause us to get discouraged and it certainly can take the joy out of living.

Paul reminds us to look to the Lord and trust in Him. Christ has already conquered sin, death and the devil and He has given us life and salvation through His death and resurrection. If the Lord has accomplished this for us, He will certainly give us all that we need in this life. He is our Good Shepherd who guides us and looks after us. He comforts us in His Word. It is the Lord who turns our worry into peace, hope and joy. In times of worry let us turn to the Lord and trust in Him. Remember the Lord has promised that He will never leave us or forsake us.

In Christ,

Pastor Kevin Wendorf (St. John's -- Chatham, IL)

Pray For Our Central Illinois District Missions supported by your church's Mission Dollars to the District. *Our Lord Jesus said, "Pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers into the harvest." This month, please remember in your prayers all the students, particularly those from CID, who are studying at our Synod's colleges and seminaries to be pastors, teachers, and other kinds of church workers – many with the help of scholarship money from CID.*

Items of Interest to Share

MUSIC FOR MISSIONS EVENT to Support Christo Rey - This event is a sacred music concert and hymn singing in support of Christo Rey (Christ the King) Lutheran Church, East Moline.

The event is scheduled for Sunday, October 13, 2024, at 2:00 p.m. at St. John's Lutheran Church, 711 Court St., Pekin. Music for Missions will feature guest organist Samuel Bishop, vocalists Allison Harley and Jennifer Rosa, the Bells of St. John's, St. John's Sanctuary Choir, and ample congregational singing.

A free-will offering will be collected to support Christo Rey Lutheran Church, a mission congregation of the Central Illinois District, LC-MS. Refreshments will be served following the program. Everyone is welcome! For more information, contact the St. John's, Pekin church office at 309-347-2136.

Current DFM Project Amount to be funded: \$25,000 (is currently half-funded)

Project: Replace furnaces at Immanuel Lutheran Student Center, Macomb

It is a great blessing that all four of CID's campus ministries are headquartered in facilities near their campuses. Three of the four are owned by the District. One is the Immanuel Lutheran Student Center in Macomb, one block from Western Illinois University.

Church services are held at 11:00 a.m. every Sunday in the student center's Chapel of St. Timothy the Learner. Students and members of Immanuel Lutheran Church, CID's partner in campus ministry in Macomb, attend. On Wednesday evenings, students are invited to meals prepared by church member families in the student center kitchen prior to a weekly Bible study session also in the student center. The pastor's office and church office for Immanuel Macomb are located in the center and highly accessible to students.

The student center celebrated its 50th anniversary some five years ago. Now, the furnaces need to be replaced. The current Dollar for Missions project will provide \$25,000 for furnace replacement to keep the student center operational for years.

The Camp CILCA Lowdown

October, 2024

217-487-7497 / camp@cilca.org

4124 Camp Cilca Rd.

Cantrall, IL 62625



❖ **G.R.I.T. Run: October 5**

- Open run participants ages 6-18 run for \$10, and participants 19+ run for \$30. Coaches run for free and family members of high school participants run for \$15.

❖ **Act Like Men Work Day: November 2**

❖ **Young Adult Game Night: November 9**

- Camp CILCA is hosting a game night for young adults (21+). There is no cost, just bring a friend, any games you want to play, snacks or sides to share. 3-6pm.

❖ **Women's Scrapbook Retreat: November 15-17**

- Cost is \$90 for your shared room and meals. (Private rooms are available upon request for \$120.) Register at cilca.org/womens-scrapbooking-retreat



HELP NEEDED!

Camp CILCA is looking for one or more *housekeepers* to help prepare facilities for the summer camp program, outdoor education, and retreats. If you know someone interested in this contact Camp CILCA at 217-487-7497 or director@cilca.org.

Camp CILCA exists to strengthen and foster faith in Jesus Christ and relationships with others in a unique outdoor setting.

Find out more at www.cilca.org

FROM OUR NEW SEMINARIAN

Dear St. John's Lutheran Church,

Greetings to you in Christ! My name is Brandon Streeks, and by God's grace, I am a first-year student at Concordia Theological Seminary. I recently finished Summer Greek, and will be starting Fall Quarter classes on Sept 9th.

I'm reaching out to you today, because I received a phone call from the financial aid office on Friday, and they told me that I had been selected by your congregation through the Student Adoption Program! God be praised, and thank you very much for coming on this Seminary journey with us! My family and I appreciate you, and your support.

My family and I are also very appreciative of your financial support. There are no words that can express the appreciation we have for your generous giving through financial support. My wife and I both were very stressed about how much debt we would be accumulating through Federal Student Loans just in this quarter alone. But through your generous financial support, you have eliminated my entire federal loan need for this quarter, and then some! Go be praised! I cannot begin to express the relief, gratitude, and happiness I felt when I received that information over the phone! It was such a weight taken off our shoulders, and we thank you, and thank God for this! We also appreciate, and are very grateful for your congregation and your prayers for us as we begin Seminary life! Thank you again so very much! Also, the seminary made it very clear to us to keep this information to ourselves, and we will do just that. The only person I've talked to about this is my wife, and beyond that we haven't told anyone else, and do not plan to. Thank you again very much for this support!

I also wanted to tell you a little bit about myself. I am a lifelong Lutheran. I was raised in western Nebraska in the panhandle. My hometown is Bayard, Nebraska. 3 miles North of Chimney Rock National Monument along the Oregon Trail. I was Baptized on August 17th, 1997, at Faith Lutheran Church in Gering NE, by, Rev. Richard Neugebauer. I was also confirmed there on April 29th, 2012, by, Rev. Neugebauer.

We have a family farm on my dad's side of the family. So a big chunk of my childhood was spent out there helping work cattle, planting/harvesting crops, endlessly fixing fence, and other daily tasks to be done on a farm. It was a lot at times, but I wouldn't trade all of that quality time with my family for anything.

I graduated from Bayard High School in 2016, and enrolled in Concordia University in Seward Nebraska, and started there that fall. There, I met my wife Shaeli Neustel, and we were married the following year on December 30th 2017. We were married at Faith Lutheran Church in Thornton Colorado, where her father is pastor (Rev. Terry Neustel). Terry graduated from CTSFW in 2009, and he did his vicarage at Holy

Cross in Moline Illinois, not too far from you all! Small world 😊.

We had our first child in December of 2019, and during that time I had left school, and worked at The United States Postal Service to support my small family. Eventually went back, and I just finished my degree from Concordia Nebraska in June with a BA in Theology and Pre-Seminary Studies.

My wife also graduated from Concordia Nebraska in 2020, and she has a BS in Early Childhood Education, as well as her Lutheran Teaching Diploma (LTD). She now teaches 1st and 2nd grade at Bethlehem Lutheran School in Ossian Indiana. She enjoys it there, and has wonderful students, families, pastors, and fellow teachers!

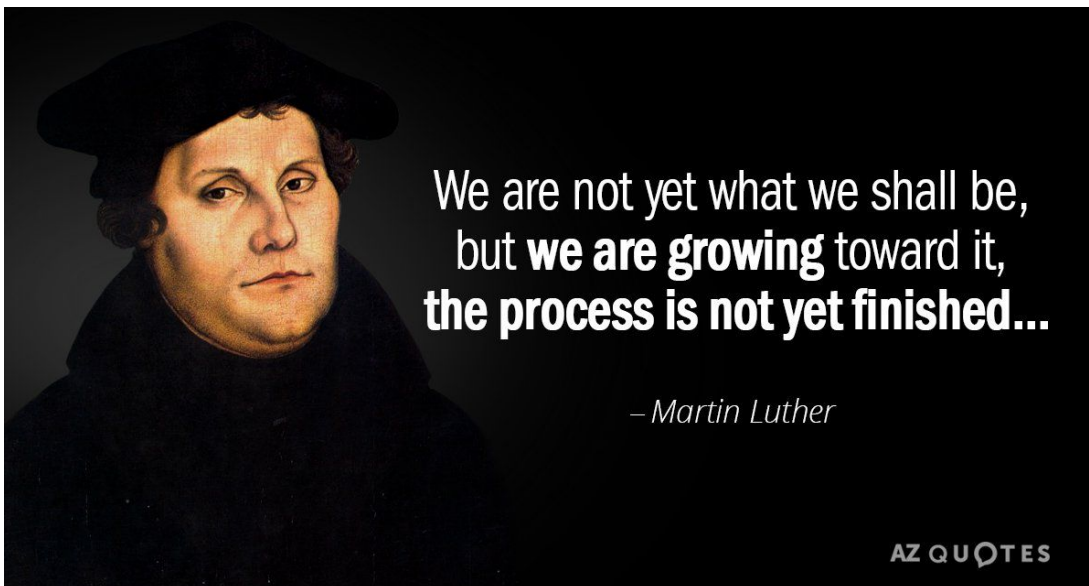
I mentioned above that we had our first child in Dec 2019. We now have 3 great children! Ella Kay Streeks (4 years old), Nathaniel Allen Streeks (2 years old), and Beckett Daniel Streeks (11 months old). They all keep us very busy! Navigating school, work, and Ella's 2nd year of preschool has been a challenge already this year, but we've always been able to make it work! Some of our favorite things to do as a family are read books together, go for walks, play board games, and watch the very popular tv show "Bluey."

God has blessed us with a loving family, and beautiful place to call home in Fort Wayne, and Confessional Seminary to learn from, and now also your congregation and generous support!

Thank you again from the bottom of our hearts for your support financially, your gifts, and your prayers!

In Christ,

Brandon, Shaeli, Ella, Nate, and Beckett Streeks





ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 GENESEO IL
 815-989-2025

October 2024

ELDER: Aaron Raschke

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3 Marriage of Mike Blair & Dayla Jones 4:30 pm	4	5
6 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Elders' 11:30 am	7 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i> <i>Pastor @ CID Conf.</i>	8 Council 6 pm	9	10	11	12 Work Day 8 am.
13 LWML Sunday SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am	14 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	15 LWML 1:00 pm Men's Bible Study 6:30 pm	16	17	18	19 <i>Rain Date for Work Day.</i>
20 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship/Comm 10 am Youth 11:30 am	21 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	22	23	24 SS Teachers 6:30 pm	25	26
27 SS/Adult/Youth Bible Study 8:45am Worship 10 am Voters' Assembly 11am	28 <i>Pastor's Day Off</i>	29	30	31	<i>For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost. Luke 19:10</i>	



ST. JOHN'S EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
8948 N 1900 AVE
GENESEO IL 61254-8941

Sunday school/Adult & Youth Bible Class 8:45am

WORSHIP SERVICES 10 am
(Holy Communion 1st, 3rd Sundays)

Live Streaming each week on Facebook

