

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Malone, Texas

August 2005



**Grace and peace to you in Christ Jesus,
God Incarnate!**

If you saw any news during the past week, it would have been hard to miss the stories concerning the Boy Scouts and the space shuttle. The one is certainly a story of tragedy: five lives lost, and many young people made seriously ill, because it would seem that some within the Boy Scouts forgot the motto, 'be prepared.' On the other hand, the shuttle finally returned to service roughly two and a half years after the Columbia tragedy. The crew travelled under many watchful eyes and carried the means they would need to make any repairs needed to ensure the safety of the crew. Now, despite the best efforts of NASA, it sounds like the shuttles will be 'grounded' again, but it seems that the preparations have paid off and the current crew will be able to safely return to Earth.

Are you prepared? And what does it mean to be prepared? If we are speaking of worldly 'safety,' fretting over what *might* happen can be overwhelming; "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matt. 6:34) Rather, our concern should be that we would be ready to confess the hope which is ours in Christ—a hope which stands upon Him who delivered us from sin and death. "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed." (1 Pet. 3:15–16)

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Heiser*

Schedule of Church Events and Activities for August:

August 3	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class
August 7	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service/Communion
	11:45 a.m.	Board of Education
	11:45 a.m.	Potluck/Refresher Course
August 14	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Catechetical Service *
August 17	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class
August 20	8 a.m.	Men's Fellowship
	8 a.m.	Women's Guild
	9 a.m.	Board of Trustees
August 21	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service/Communion
	11:45 a.m.	Potluck/Refresher Course
August 24	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class
August 28	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service
	11:45 a.m.	Church Council
August 31	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class

* Please note that in August, there will be communion services on the first and *third* Sundays of the month. We will return to our usual schedule in September.

Serving in Christ's Church in August:

Elder: Weldon Reinke

Organists: Tina Schnell and Patsy Williams

Ushers: Todd Schulz (Captain), Alvin Ender, Cliff Krumvieda, Del Schulz, Eric Rachut

Counters: Kenny Kelm, Dorothy Markwardt, Cheri Thomas

Altar Guild: Denise Heiser, Lizzie Youngblood

Acolyte: John Heiser

“ATLANTIC JIHAD”— Islam’s terroristic holy war is nothing new! On August 14th, the Adult Bible Class will watch a presentation which sets forth the history of Islamic raids which carried away hundreds of European Christians and sold them into slavery. Please join us for this informative video!

ADULT REFRESHER CLASS— We will have class on the 7th and 21st this month. On the 7th, we will begin with the Third Article of the Creed, and begin our review of the Lord’s Prayer. On the 21st, we should plan to finish the review of the Lord’s Prayer and then discuss holy Baptism. Please join us for these informative sessions! It’s a great opportunity to review what you learned in confirmation—without the tests!

CHURCH COUNCIL— All members of the Church Council should plan to attend our meeting on August 28th following the divine service. We are having an extra meeting this quarter to divide the duties necessary before the October voters meeting.

SALEM LUTHERAN WOMEN’S GUILD— The August meeting will be on the 20th at 8 a.m. We plan to clean the carpets in the fellowship hall following our meeting. Also, the Women’s Guild is looking at new vacuum cleaners for the Church.

FLOWER CHART— The Women’s Guild has placed a flower chart in the narthex so that members will have the opportunity to provide flowers to beautify the altar. If you would like to provide flowers for one or more Sundays, please sign up on the chart. Please remember that you will be responsible for purchasing the flowers.

Items needed at Church:

- paper towels;
- paper or styrofoam plates;
- kleenex.



Another Enjoyable and Educational VBS!

This year's VBS—"Lord, Have Mercy!"—emphasized Law (the 10 Commandments as 'curb', 'mirror' and 'guide') and the Gospel. The children all seemed to have an enjoyable time, and found it a good learning experience. Many thanks to Tina for playing for us each evening; to Denise, Terri and Sue for teaching; to Dorothy, Lodie and Lillian for helping in the kitchen; and to Cliff and Pam for the puppet show.





The puppet show was one of the parts of the VBS that everyone enjoyed (and it put the lesson for the evening in an ... interesting... perspective.





Pastoral Colloquium Meets in Niles, Michigan

The pastors who signed the Malone Statement gathered in Niles, Michigan for a pastoral colloquium from July 19th through 21st. We were also joined by the Rev. Eric Stefanski, the pastor of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Harrison, Arkansas. Pastor Stefanski resigned from the LC—MS in March; his congregation was already independent at that time.

Our host for this meeting was St. Boniface Lutheran Church in Niles and the congregation's elder, Mr. Chris Clubine, was present for most of the presentations by the pastors.

The theme for the colloquium was "The Church, Contemporary Issues and Catholicity." The purpose of the colloquium was to explore the 'catholicity' (that is, the universality) of Christian doctrine and practice—what remains unchanging and universally the faith and life of the Church. Four papers were delivered:

- ✦ "Living for Tomorrow," by Pr. John Rutowicz;
- ✦ "Church and Office or Synod and Ministry— Which is Catholic?," by Pr. C. D. Hudson;

- ✦ “Catholicity is Contemporary,” by Pr. Paul Siems;
- ✦ “Bishops, Councils and Authority in the Church in the *Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope*,” by Pr. James Heiser.

We are reviewing these presentations in Adult Bible Class because they are edifying, and so that members will have a clear understanding of the history and teaching of the Church.

The colloquium was quite productive, as it gave the pastors an opportunity to discuss the topics of the presentations at some length, and also to discuss a number of additional points in which we were clearly in agreement. The fruit of these discussions is expressed in the “Points of Agreement on Controverted Issues of the Day,” which is printed at the end of this report. These points were drawn up so that pastors and other interested individuals outside our fellowship will know what our pastors believe, teach and confess on these points. The plan is that these “Points of Agreement” will eventually be put on a website where further individuals may register their agreement. Subscription to the “Points of Agreement” does not establish fellowship (that occurs on the basis of God’s Word and the Lutheran Confessions and was already expressed in the Malone Statement). Rather, in the midst of



Pastors Stefanski and Rutowicz—both proudly Polish—reminded us that the Evangelical Lutheran Church is not “German.”

the deep doctrinal confusion which reigns in most of the Lutheran churches in America, we were agreed that it was wise to express our agreement on these clearly biblical and confessional points.

The colloquium also offered time for fellowship among the pastors and with members of St. Boniface. On Wednesday evening, the parish had a potluck for attendees which offered an opportunity for fellowship. They made us all feel very much “at home”—their welcome was of the same warm character as that which Salem’s members extended to our visitors last Summer. Mr. Clubine made the observation that he wished we could get all of the members of the parishes together. I wholeheartedly share that sentiment! From my experiences with the members of Christ-Richmond and St. Boniface, there is a very great similarity of spirit between those two parishes and our own.

Following the colloquium, two of the presentations (those of Pr. Hudson and Pr. Siems) have already been presented in video form to the Texas Confessional Lutherans and were highly praised for the scholarship and piety manifest in those presentations. It is our hope that we will be able to make these presentations widely available in the months to come. It is worth noting that the colloquium received very good press coverage: the meeting was covered in three articles in three local and regional newspapers!

In conclusion, Sean and I both wanted to thank the parish for their support for our travel to the conference. I also wanted to let it be known that the generous support which many of you provided for the relief of conference expenses was well-used: all of the pastors were in agreement that St. Boniface should have those funds, so as to offset some of the expenses associated with the conference.

—Pastor Heiser

**Points of Agreement on Controverted issues of the Day
Agreed in Niles, Michigan
21 July A.D. 2005**

We all agree:

Office of the Ministry

- 1) The office of the ministry is not merely a function in the church but the divinely established office in the church. Its holders represent Christ to the church and give God's gifts to God's people.
- 2) The office of the ministry is not derived from baptism; rather it is conferred through call and ordination within the church.
- 3) That women cannot hold the office of the ministry, nor presume to function in it, in the church catholic.
- 4) Ordination is not an adiaphoron. It is part of a right understanding of a proper call.

Pulpit and Altar Fellowship

- 5) The practice of closed communion is biblical and confessional, and the true practice of Christian love.
- 6) Worship together with non-Christians is a violation of the Christian faith and a gross sin against the triune God.
- 7) Participation in an event of joint public prayer, that is, taking part in a religious service in which many different gods are invoked is participation in universalistic worship and is clear violation of scripture.
- 8) Calling such participation acceptable because it is "serial" is deceptive and a violation of scripture.
- 9) Being in pulpit and altar fellowship with any particular member of the Lutheran World Federation, or any other such organization, puts one in fellowship with all members of the LWF or any other such organization.

The Lord's Supper

- 10) The use of grape juice or any other element but natural wine for the blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper is a violation of Christ's institution, as is the use of anything other than natural bread for the body of Christ.
- 11) We recognize that it is preferable from the scriptures, confessions, and

catholic practice that pastors offer the Lord's Supper to the flock each Lord's day, and that the divine service of word and sacrament is the normal service for the Lord's day.

Catholicity

12) The term "catholic" is not the possession of any particular church body, including the Church of Rome. To say that the church is "catholic" is to confess that it is the one true and universal church, which teaches the Word of God in its truth and purity and administers the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. Therefore any church body which teaches false doctrines and/or corrupts the sacraments, even if it claims catholicity, is not catholic.

13) The teaching of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession (i.e. that of all the Concordia) is the true catholic doctrine. The church that faithfully adheres to and confesses this historic, apostolic faith, drawn from the unchanging Holy Scriptures, is a truly catholic church. To be truly Lutheran is to be truly catholic.

14) The Lutheran Church continues to express its catholicity through our use of the liturgy of the Western Church, as it was purified at the time of the Reformation, traditional vestments for the divine service and various prayer offices, and retention of the historic church year.

15) The Bible is God's Word without error.

Agreed to by:

Mr. Chris Clubine, St. Boniface Evangelical Lutheran Church, Niles, Michigan.

Mr. Sean Fant, Salem Lutheran Church, Malone, Texas.

Pastor James D. Heiser, Salem Lutheran Church, Malone, Texas.

Pastor Charles D. Hudson, Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Richmond, Missouri.

Pastor John S. Rutowicz, St. Boniface Evangelical Lutheran Church, Niles, Michigan.

Pastor Paul A. Siems, Bride of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, Wichita, Kansas.

Pastor Eric J. Stefanski, Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church, Harrison, Arkansas.

WILL MISSOURI SYNOD CONGREGATIONS EVEN BE ALLOWED TO ‘DISSENT’ AGAINST FALSE DOCTRINE? —

Two parishes of the Indiana Circuit of the LC—MS’s ‘English District’ must be wondering about that very question right now. Concerned with the false doctrine promoted by the doctrinal resolution of last Summer’s convention in St. Louis which blessed the unionism and syncretism which are spreading within the LC—MS, two congregations (Bethany-Fort Wayne and Redeemer-Fort Wayne) requested a Circuit Forum so that they could enter the ‘dissent’ process in keeping with synodical regulations which concern such a status. ‘Dissent’ is the only means open within the synod for addressing a doctrinal resolution, and it requires that doctrinal concerns first be set forth before ‘peers’ (i.e., the Circuit Forum) to begin the process. The Circuit Counselor refused this request! ‘No meeting, no dissent’ would seem to be the logic. However, the secretary of synod told the two congregations that they could present their ‘dissent’ before another circuit, and the Decatur Circuit of the Indiana District agreed to hear them.

What a measure of how things stand in the LC—MS! As we have seen in recent years, the liberals first demand to be heard, and then seek to silence any voices of opposition to their false doctrine.

These two Fort Wayne parishes are engaged in a brave, but ultimately almost certainly futile effort; one of the pastors readily acknowledged that the almost inevitable conclusion will be failure of the dissent to bring a change in the synod at the 2007 convention, and then they will have no biblical option but to withdraw from the LC—MS.

TEN TEXAS DISTRICT CONGREGATIONS PREPARE TO ENTER A ‘STATE OF CONFESSION’ —

The effort which began last year at the meeting Grace Lutheran in Elgin is continuing to make progress. Concerned with the dominant false doctrine in the LC—MS, pastors and laymen from many congregations gathered to discuss entering a ‘State of Confession’ against the synod, while preparing for the formation of a new synod. At present, there are ten congregations which have voted their intention to enter this ‘State of Confession’ and the document (and supporting Bible studies) are being drafted and finalized. (Note: this effort is in addition to that of Trinity-Austin, which declared itself in a ‘State of Confession’ in June.) The momentum around the LC—MS for an ‘Exodus’ seems to be growing. Stay tuned!

Salem Lutheran Church

718 HCR 3424 E

Malone, TX 76660

(254) 533-2330

The Rev. James D. Heiser, Pastor

9:30 a.m. Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Divine Service

Holy Communion—1st and 2nd Sundays

On the Radio: KHDR (1560 AM) Sunday at 9:15 a.m.

On the Web: <http://www.salemchurch.net>

