

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Malone, Texas

March 2007



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

On the night when He was betrayed, Jesus declared to His disciples, "If I had not done among them the works which no one else did, they would have no sin; but now they have seen and also hated both Me and My Father. But this happened that the word might be fulfilled which is written in their law, 'They hated Me without a cause.'" (John 15:24–25) Jesus gave testimony to His divinity, and the fact that He is the Redeemer, through His teaching and His works. But there were many who despised and rejected Him.

Today, there are still many who reject the Redeemer. In the midst of this holy season, an entire TV network is blaspheming Christ through the promulgation of superficial lies intended to confuse the faithful. This is, of course, just 'more of the same' along the lines of the absurd fiction, *The Da Vinci Code*. We have come to expect this from the world. Satan is enraged that the Church endures, and the father of lies continues to seek to enshare all whom he possibly can.

Such assaults of the faith should simply encourage us to press on in our faithful witness, and to speak the Word in its truth and purity. St. Paul thus exhorted St. Titus to seek those men for the holy ministry who are "holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict." (Tit. 1:9) And Paul went on to explain, "For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain." (Tit. 1:10–11) Such deceivers are only overcome by the Word. The Word of God has set us free from fear, and gives us the hope of eternal life.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Heiser*

Schedule for March

4 th	9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class Divine Service-Holy Communion Board of Elders
7 th	11 a.m. 7:30 p.m.	Bible Study—Psalms Lent Vespers Service
11 th	9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class Divine Service-Holy Communion Board of Education
14 th	11 a.m. 7:30 p.m.	Bible Study—Psalms Lent Vespers Service
17 th	8 a.m. 9 a.m. 9 a.m.	Men's Fellowship Breakfast Board of Trustees Women's Guild
18 st	9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class Divine Service-Holy Communion
21 st	11 a.m. 7:30 p.m.	Bible Study—Psalms Lent Vespers Service
25 th	9:30 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 11:45 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class Divine Service Altar Guild meeting
28 th	11 a.m. 7:30 p.m.	Bible Study—Psalms Lent Vespers Service



It is customary during Lent for us to observe the season with midweek services. Our **Wednesday** evening services will be the Order of **Vespers**, beginning at **7:30 p.m.** The sermon series this Lent will focus on the Evening Psalms appointed for the week:

March 7—Psalm 25

March 14—Psalm 86

March 21—Psalm 139

March 28—Psalm 27

March Birthdays:

- 1st: Nelda Ondrey
- 2nd: Daniel Watson
- 3rd: Esther Reinke
- 5th: David Bow
- 9th: Barbara Markwardt
- 11th: Joshua Crumpton, Ronnie Wilcoxon
- 18th: Linda Banik
- 27th: Tim Kucera
- 29th: Sean Fant
- 30th: Brandon Baxter
- 31st: Tim Westmoreland

March Anniversaries:

- 16th: Todd & Lori Williams
 - 20th: Cliff & Pam Krumvieda
 - 25th: Greg & Jessica Markwardt
 - 27th: Edwin & Rachel Kunkel
-

Mission Festival March 25th

The last Sunday of this month (which is also the Festival of the Annunciation) we will have our first quarterly Mission Festival for 2007. In the midst of Lent, we know the peace which is ours through the redemption Christ Jesus accomplished through His suffering, death and resurrection for us. Help others share in that joy and peace!

Ecclesiastes Bible Study

The Sunday morning Adult Bible Class is now studying Solomon's *Ecclesiastes*. There is much to be learned from this book! As Solomon (calling himself 'the Preacher') declares: "The Preacher sought to find acceptable words; and what was written was upright—words of truth. The words of the wise are like goads, and the words of scholars are like well-driven nails, given by one Shepherd." (Ecc. 12:10–11)

Ahonen called to serve as Deacon for Salem Lutheran Church

In our January voters meeting, there was discussion of calling Rev. Jeffrey Ahonen to the position of ordained Deacon, thus extending to him a valid call to the holy ministry so that he would begin his mission work, and also fill Salem's need for pastoral care during Pastor Heiser's vacations. The decision was made in our January meeting to schedule a special voters meeting February 4th to consider extending such a call. The vote to extend the call to Rev. Ahonen was unanimous.

The position description of Deacon of Salem Lutheran Church, as presented to the Voting Members, is as follows:

This position would be a very Part-Time position and *shall be paid on a per-service-rendered basis*. (This means that the remuneration is limited to those occasions when he is serving at Salem, and is not a salary.)

The Deacon will be expected to:

- a. Travel to Salem Lutheran Church to Preach the Word and Administer the Sacraments during the Pastor's vacation Sundays (3).
- b. Consult with the Pastor before scheduling preaching engagements at other congregations.
- c. Maintain a good standing with the Pastor and the diocese.

The Deacon will be asked to:

- a. Within the time frame of the Deacon's visit, lead other appropriate scheduled church studies, meetings and functions.
- b. Endeavor to develop mission congregations.
- c. Enjoy the hospitality of members of Salem Lutheran Church including room, board, and transportation to the best of its members' abilities during those times when he is serving in Texas.

The Deacon will not be required to do any of the following:

- a. Pay for travel expenses.
- b. Attend the services of Salem Lutheran Church, other than those requiring his travel and services.
- c. Perform any service without adequate remuneration.

The call specifies up to \$600 per year in remuneration for filling in for Pastor Heiser, and up to \$750 for travel expenses.

Rev. Ahonen's Visit to Salem

Following Salem's decision to extend him a call to serve as Salem's Deacon, Rev. Ahonen requested an opportunity to meet with interested members of Salem to discuss our expectations regarding this call, and for him to set forth some of his hopes

regarding various mission opportunities. He visited with us on the evening of February 19th. Between twenty and twenty-five members were in attendance.

Rev. Ahonen led a discussion of mission prospects in the northern Midwest. Based on his personal knowledge and ministerial experience and contacts with other pastors and congregations in the region, confessional Lutheran missions could be planted in a wide variety of locations in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, Wisconsin, or Minnesota. Throughout the region, there is a heritage of "cultural" Lutheranism (family ties, etc.), but a great weakness of Lutheran substance. The primary issue at present is whether the Lord will open secular employment opportunities which would give Rev. Ahonen the opportunity to engage in mission work in the region.

We had the chance to talk about sharing the Gospel—always a joy!—enjoyed a potluck together and celebrated Carl Payne's 73rd birthday. It was a good evening! Please keep Rev. Ahonen in your prayers as he seeks the Lord's will regarding this call.



Salem Lutheran Women's Guild:

Our February meeting was highly productive. Denise Heiser graciously continues to bring excellent opening devotions. Her material has influenced wonderful discussions of Christian life. After devotion our meeting mainly focused on reworking our bylaws. Progress was made and we'll be finishing this up next meeting. Also in March we will discuss plans for the coming spring and summer. As a reminder, all women of the church and their visiting family and friends are welcome to join the Men's Breakfast and the Women's Guild. We meet every third Saturday of the month following breakfast at 8 AM.

Men's Fellowship:

The Men of Salem are working on an event for April 28th. The fare for this shindig is rumoured to include spaghetti and meatloaf. Music for this event is in the planning stages.

Board of Education:

The Education Board will have an Easter Egg Hunt following Easter services. Kids, remember to bring your baskets.

Daylight Savings Time Comes Earlier This Year!

A friendly reminder: Daylight Savings Time begins earlier this year on March 11th. Remember to "spring" forward your clocks.

—Pam Krumvieda

KHBR RADIO MINISTRY—If you wish to contribute to the support of the radio outreach, the cost per weekly broadcast is \$30. Such offerings may be placed in the regular Sunday offering—just mark the envelope "radio ministry" (checks should be made to Salem Lutheran Church).



In memoriam
Delta Schulz

It was the will of our loving heavenly Father to call Delta to her eternal rest on Sunday, February 18th.

Delta Schulz was born September 10, 1918 to Herman and Della (Radke) Symank and raised in the Malone community. She was baptized at St. Peter Lutheran (Walling) on March 23, 1919 and confirmed on September 4, 1932.

Delta married Eddie L. Schulz on November 25, 1937. She joined Salem Lutheran Church and remained a faithful member of the congregation to the end of her days.

She was preceded in death by her husband on October 29, 1967, brothers Ben and Buster Symank, and sister Oleda Dalton.

Survivors include her son, Eddie Ray Schulz and wife, Carolyn Sue, of Malone; daughter Barbara Markwardt and husband Larry, of Red Oak; sisters Lena Radke of Malone and Edna Taylor of Dallas; grandchildren Jeff Schulz, Todd Schulz and Lana, Shannon Henkel and Todd, Greg Markwardt and Jessica; and great-grandchildren, Del and Jana Schulz, Jonathan and Bryan Henkel.

Internment followed the February 21st funeral service at Salem Lutheran Cemetery, where her mortal remains will await the resurrection unto eternal life which Christ Jesus promises to all who believe in Him. "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (Rev. 22:20)

TO GOD BE ALL THE GLORY!

Maier Debunks the Lies about “the Jesus Family Tomb”

The following is an “open letter” from Rev. Dr. Paul L. Maier, a professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University and Lutheran theologian. Although it would be hard to describe Maier as a “confessional Lutheran,” we have to appreciate his excellent analysis of the blasphemous trash the Discovery Channel is running. The decision to air such antiChristian nonsense about our Lord during the season of Lent is all the more clearly an overt attack on the faith. The Church rejoices that the eternal Son of God became Man, and suffered, died and rose again for our salvation—this is the truth, and Satan’s lies can never overturn the precious Good News of the Gospel.

Dear Friends and Readers,

Thanks for the profusion of e-mails I’ve received over the last two days regarding the Talpiot tombs discovery in Jerusalem, a.k.a., “the Jesus Family Tomb” story. Some of you also suggested that ‘life seemed to be following art’ so far as my *A Skeleton in God’s Closet* was concerned. Believe me, this is *not* the way I wanted my novel to hit the visual media!

Alas, this whole affair is just the latest in the long-running media attack on the historical Jesus, which I call “More Junk on Jesus.” We all thought it had culminated in that book of falsehoods, *The Da Vinci Code*. But no: The caricatures of Christ continue.

Please, lose no sleep over the Talpiot “discoveries” for the following reasons, and here are the facts:

(1) Nothing is new here: Scholars have known about the ossuaries ever since March of 1980, so this is old news recycled. The general public learned about the ossuaries when the BBC filmed a documentary on them in 1996, and the “findings” tanked again. James Tabor’s book, *The Jesus Dynasty*, also made a big fuss over the Talpiot tombs more recently, and now James Cameron (“Titanic”) and Simcha Jacobovici have climbed aboard the sensationalist bandwagon as well. Another book comes out today, equally as worthless as the previous.

(2) All the names ‘Yeshua (Joshua, Jesus), Joseph, Maria, Mariamene, Matia, Judah, and Jose’ are extremely common Jewish names for that time and place, and thus nearly all scholars consider that these names are merely coincidental, as they did from the start. Some scholars dispute that “Yeshua” is even one of the names. One out of four Jewish women at that time, for example, was named Maria. There are 21 Yeshuas cited by Josephus, the first-century Jewish historian, who were important enough to be recorded by him, with many thousands of others that never made history. The wondrous mathematical odds hyped by Jacobovici that these names *must* refer to Jesus and His family are simply playing by numbers and lying by statistics.

(3) There is no reason whatever to equate “Mary Magdalene” with “Mariamene,” as Jacobovici claims. And so what if her DNA is different from that of “Yeshua”? That particular “Mariamme” (as it is usually spelled today) could indeed have been the wife of *that* particular “Yeshua,” who certainly was not Jesus.

(4) Why in the world would the “Jesus Family” have a burial site in Jerusalem, of all places, the very city that crucified Jesus? Galilee was their home. In Galilee they *could* have had such a family plot, not Judea. Besides all of which, church tradition and the earliest Christian historian, Eusebius of Caesarea, are unanimous in reporting that Mary, the mother of Jesus, died in Ephesus, where the apostle John, faithful to his commission from Jesus on the cross, had accompanied her.

(5) The “Jesus Family” simply could not have afforded the large crypt uncovered at Talpiot, which housed, or could have housed, 200 ossuaries.

(6) If this were Jesus’ family burial site, what is Matthew doing there—if indeed “Matia” is thus to be translated?

(7) How come there is no tradition *whatever*—Christian, Jewish, or secular—that any part of the Holy Family was buried at Jerusalem?

(8) Please note the extreme bias of the director and narrator, Simcha Jacobovici. The man is an Indiana Jones wannabe who oversensationalizes anything he touches. You may have caught him on his TV special regarding *The Exodus*, in which he “explained” just about *everything* that still needed proving or explaining in the Exodus account in the Old Testament! It finally became ludicrous, and now he’s doing it again, though in reverse—this time attacking the Scriptural record. As for James Cameron, how do you follow the success of *Titanic*? Well, with an even more “titanic” story. He should have known better, and the television footage of the two making their drastic statements on Monday, February 26, was disgusting, and their subsequent claim that they respected Jesus nauseating.

9) Even Israeli authorities, who—were they anti-Christian—might have used this “discovery” to discredit Christianity, did not do so. Quite the opposite. Joe Zias, for example, for years the director of the Rockefeller Museum in Jerusalem, holds Jacobovici’s claims up for scorn and his documentary as “nonsense.” Those involved in the project “have no credibility whatever,” he added. Amos Kloner, the first archaeologist to examine the site, said the conclusions in question fail to hold up by archaeological standards “but make for profitable television.” William Dever, one of America’s most prominent archaeologists, said, “This would be amusing if it didn’t mislead so many people.”

(10) Finally, and most importantly, there is no external literary or historical evidence *whatever* that Jesus’ family was interred together in a common burial place anywhere, let alone Jerusalem. The evidence, in fact, totally controverts all this in the case of Jesus: All four Gospels, the letters of St. Paul, and the common testimony of the early church state that Jesus rose from the dead, and did not leave His bones behind

in any ossuary, as the current sensationalists claim.

Bottom line: This is merely naked hype, baseless sensationalism, and nothing less than a media fraud—“more junk on Jesus.”

With warm regards,

Paul L. Maier, Ph.D., Litt.D.
Department of History
Western Michigan Univ Kalamazoo, Michigan

Trinity Lutheran Prepares to Leave LC—MS

In the latest newsletter of Trinity Lutheran Church (Herrin, IL), Pastor Michael D. Henson explains why the congregation will be leaving the LC—MS following this Summer's convention:

New Default Position

On January 9, 2005, Trinity Lutheran Church made the godly decision to stay in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, follow the Synodical Dissent Process and fight for a return to the truth. At the same time we entered a State of Confession, in which we refused to commune with those who haven't renounced their Synod's public profession of these six points of false teaching. Since that time we have always maintained that should the July 2007 LCMS Convention not correct the six points of false teaching, which became the official position of our Synod at the 2004 LCMS Convention, we will be leaving her. We knew that a State of Confession could not go on indefinitely.

Well, the July 2007 LCMS Convention is only six months away. After speaking, writing, and distributing countless literature, I am pretty sure that most people in the LCMS simply don't care. Some embrace the new false teachings. Many don't personally agree with the changes, but they consider these things to be a matter of personal preference, not false teaching to be avoided. And finally, there are a small number of pastors (with unwilling congregations) and laymen (with unwilling pastors) who lament the changes but don't have many options. The various statements from official Synodical

publications and elected leaders make me assume that nothing is going to change. It appears that Synod will not return to her former Scriptural position regarding our six points.

Trinity Lutheran Church, pastors and members, will continue to follow the course we began two years ago, however. However with this newsletter article, I will change from the default position of hoping that Synod will return to **the new default position of assuming that Synod is not going to return**. We will continue to follow Synod's procedure for dissent, including overtures to the 2007 LCMS Convention, but I want you to be ready for what appears quite likely. At this point, sad to say (for Synod, not for us), we need to be prepared to mark and avoid Synod as teaching falsehood (Rom. 16:17, 1 Tim. 6:3ff), and in accordance with Trinity's constitution, leave the Missouri Synod.

When I was asked by one of our Circuit's pastors whether the Synod and District were aware that we were preparing to leave the Synod, I told him that I was not saying anything different than I have said all along. We have sent letters to the Synodical President and the CTCR. We have spoken about this at District and Circuit meetings. From the floor of our District Convention in Feb of 2006 I stated, "Either Synod will return to her former teaching and we will drop our state of confession or Synod will continue her new direction and we will leave her." In reality, Synod has chosen to leave us and take a different road, while we are staying the course.

MDH

Later in the newsletter, Pastor Henson answers the question, "How many 'Lutheran' synods (options) are there?," in part as follows:

... After these large synods, a few synods have a hundred or two congregations, but most have only 50 or less. I have not researched every one, but each one seems to have their own problems—Pentecostal/Charismatic practices, Eastern Orthodox leanings, Pietism and Moralism. So far the only option I am still considering is the "Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America" (ELDoNA). They are a group of pastors, all of whom have come out of the Missouri Synod. I attended their conference last June in Texas and was quite pleased.

MDH

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, 2nd and 3rd Sundays

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

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

