

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Malone, Texas

September 2005



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

“Can two walk together, unless they are agreed?”
(Amos 3:3)

Amos’ words—written by inspiration of the Holy Spirit—speak powerfully to our age, as they first did nearly 3,000 years ago. The people in Amos’ time were obsessed with the things of this world, and were largely indifferent to the will and word of the Lord. They raised pagan temples and gave little concern for showing justice toward one’s neighbors.

Clearly, two cannot walk together, unless they are agreed—two people who have their hearts set on different destinations must come to a ‘parting of the ways.’ However, for those who *are* agreed, it can mean new partners on the way of salvation whom one did not previously know. This point has been driven home to me over the course of this past year: the Lord has led us to meet faithful Lutheran pastors and laymen who were unknown to us previously—but the Lord knew them, and has led us to one another. In the last month, we have had contact with three more congregations, in three different states. Of course, we do not yet know whether a state of fellowship exists with these pastors and their congregations—time and discussions will (we pray) make manifest whether we are ‘walking together.’ But the most important thing for us is to be well-rooted in the Word of God, steadfast in faith. We pray the Lord will continue to guide us in the way of salvation—with Him leading us in that way, He will guide us to those with whom we are in fellowship, even if we do not yet know them.

Yours in Christ, *Pastor Heiser*

Schedule of Church Events and Activities for September:

September 4	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class/Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service/Communion
	11:45 a.m.	Board of Education
	11:45 a.m.	Potluck/Refresher Course
September 6	7:15 p.m.	Board of Elders
September 7	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class
September 9–10		Free Conference @ Brenham
September 11 “Rally Day”	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class/Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service/Communion
	11:45 a.m.	Potluck welcoming Maria Torresson
September 14	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class
September 17	8 a.m.	Men’s Fellowship
	8 a.m.	Women’s Guild
	9 a.m.	Board of Trustees
September 18	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class/Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service
	11:45 a.m.	Potluck/Refresher Course
September 20–21		Ministerium Conference
September 24	9 a.m.–3 p.m.	Women’s Guild-“Downtown Days”
September 25	9:30 a.m.	Adult Bible Class/Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service
	11:45 a.m.	Anniversary Committee meeting
September 28	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class

Serving in Christ’s Church in September:

Elder: Gary Kelm

Organists: Tina Schnell and Patsy Williams

Ushers: Kenny Kelm (Captain), Ronald Banik, Heath Krueger, Tim Kucera

Counters: Eric and Linda Rachut, Todd and Lana Schulz

Altar Guild: Rachel Kunkel, Teresa Kucera, Heather Krueger

Acolyte: Kenny Kelm, II

ADULT BIBLE CLASS WILL STUDY AMOS—

Beginning September 11th, the Sunday morning Adult Bible class will begin its study of the book of the prophet Amos.

Amos was a sheep-breeder and 'tender of sycamore fruit' before the Lord called him to be a prophet. He came from Tekoa (a town not far from Bethlehem). Based on what Scripture tells us of the circum-



stances of his ministry, Amos probably proclaimed the Word of the Lord around the year 755 B.C.—just a few years before the end of the reign of Jeroboam.

The book of Amos is focused on God's concern for justice. Thus Amos' message is a call for repentance: "But let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream." (Amos 5:24) Please make Bible study a priority in your life, and join us for study of this book.

SUNDAY SCHOOL RALLY SCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 11—Join us as we begin a new year of Sunday School! God's Word is fundamental to our whole life as Christians; reading and studying the Word at home and at Church gives a solid foundation for a Christian life. Give your children a blessing that can strengthen and guide them their whole life!

ADULT REFRESHER CLASS—We will have class on the 4th and 18th this month. On the 7th, we will begin review the Sacrament of Holy Baptism. On the 18th, we will study the Office of the Keys and Confession and Absolution. Please join us for these informative sessions! It's a great opportunity to review what you learned in confirmation—without the tests!

SALEM LUTHERAN WOMEN'S GUILD

After being rained out our previous two attempts at a fundraiser, the Women's Guild will try for the "third time charmed" on Saturday, September 24th. We will participate in "Downtown Days On the Square" in downtown Hillsboro from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. On sale will be our crafts and bakesale items. Anyone with items for the sale should have them at the church by 7 p.m. Friday, September 23rd, or bring them to the booth on Saturday.



Women's Fellowship

Thanks,

Donna & the ladies of the Salem Lutheran Women's Guild



To my brothers and sisters in Christ:

I would like to thank you all for your support of my and Pastor Heiser's trip to Niles, Michigan. The saints in Niles were very hospitable. They send their blessings upon our congregation. The Pastors Conference was an educating and enjoyable experience.

Again, I thank you and God's blessings upon you all.

Your brother in Christ,
Sean Fant

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.



Salem Begins Planning for 120th Anniversary Celebration

June 6, 2006 will mark the 120th anniversary of the Salem's founding—certainly an occasion which calls for celebration, and thanksgiving to the Holy Trinity for His mercy toward us. On **Sunday, June 4th**, we will observe this anniversary in an afternoon service. Plans are being made for various additional aspects of this anniversary celebration.

Weldon Reinke is the chairman of the anniversary committee, and he welcomes input from any member who wishes to become involved. The committee will have its next meeting on **September 25th**, following divine service.



REV. HODDE



REV. H. GAERTNER

“Air Force Releases Prayer Guidelines”

(Excerpted from August 30 *Associated Press* article, with commentary in *italics*.)

The **Air Force** released new guidelines for religious tolerance Monday that discourage public prayer at official functions and urge commanders to be sensitive about personal expressions of religious faith.

The document directs chaplains to “respect the rights of others to their own religious beliefs, including the right to hold no beliefs.” But some who have criticized the academy questioned whether needed changes will really be implemented.

(Notice: the emphasis here is not on the way in which the new rules will restrict the free speech of believers, but specifically emphasizes the ‘concern’ that the actions of Christian chaplains might not be sufficiently restricted. This, while a religion—Islam—has essentially declared war on our nation.)

The guidelines, which apply to the entire Air Force, were drawn up after allegations that evangelical Christians wield so much influence at the **Air Force Academy** in Colorado Springs that anti-Semitism and other forms of religious harassment have become pervasive. *(Colorado Springs is best known in Evangelical circles for being the headquarters for James Dobson’s Focus on the Family—hardly a bunch of anti-Semites! But notice that the it is simply taken for granted that “evangelical Christian influence=anti-Semitism and other forms of harassment.”)*

An Air Force task force concluded that some students and staff at the school have the perception that the academy favors evangelical Christians and is intolerant of those who do not share their faith. *(But ‘perception’ does not always equal ‘reality.’ Notice that no actual intolerance was found—only that some students perceived intolerance, which could be explain by projection of their own intolerance of Christianity.)*

Rob Boston, spokesman for **Americans United for Separation of Church and State**, and Abraham Foxman, head of the New York-based **Anti-Defamation League**, both said the big question now is how the rules will be implemented.

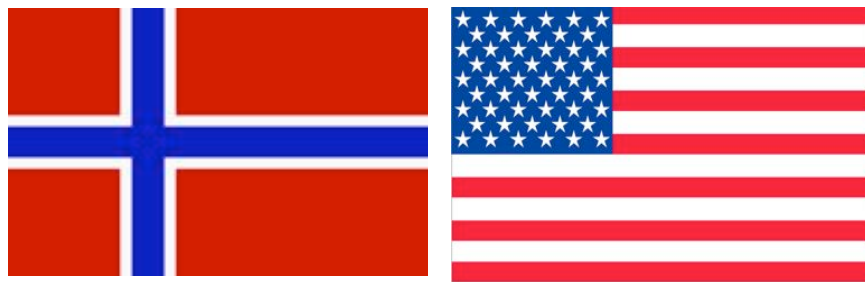
The guidelines “say all the right things,” Foxman said. “They address all the issues that were raised as problems at the Air Force Academy. The major question is, how will be they become a reality? A lot of the people implementing this are the people who violated it.” ... *(Again, no proof is needed: to accuse a Christian of intolerance is viewed as proof of the charge.)*

The guidelines do not ban public prayer outright and say short, nonsectarian prayers may be included in special ceremonies or events, but only to lend a sense of solemnity and not to promote specific beliefs. *(So... chaplains can pray as long as no one means it to be an act of worship, but only a ‘marker’ of ‘solemnity’? True prayer is speech or thought addressed to the Lord God—it is not a means of showing off one’s ‘solemnity.’ Clearly the ‘guideline’ bans prayer ‘in the name of Jesus’—in government-speak ‘nonsectarian doesn’t mean one denomination vs. another... it means one religion vs. another.)*

Nor do they bar personal discussions of religion, including discussions between commanders and subordinates. They caution Air Force members “to be sensitive to the potential that personal expressions may appear to be official expressions.” *(Which means that officers will soon be facing investigations because they mentioned Jesus to a subordinate.)*

The guidelines state that members of the Air Force “will not officially endorse or establish religion, either one specific religion, or the idea of religion over non-religion.” *(Therefore, so much for that “one nation, under God” talk in the pledge of allegiance. Will Air Force officers be allowed to say the pledge?... it seems to come down fairly decisively on “the idea of religion over non-religion.”)*

They also say that “abuse or disrespect” of Air Force members based on their religious beliefs, or lack of such beliefs, is unacceptable. *(Unless, of course, you want to be a biblical Christian, and believe it is part of your calling as a Christian to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others—let alone if you’re a chaplain and the whole reason you’re in the Air Force is sharing the Good News! How did it ever come to this in America?)*



Welcome to Maria Torressen, our exchange student from Sør-Audnedal, Norway! Maria is spending the year with Lori and Lizzie Youngblood and attending school at Bynum.

The student exchange program helps our visitors learn more about the United States, but we also get the opportunity to learn about their nation and culture.

September 11th we will have a potluck to welcome Maria to our community, and have the opportunity to get to know her a little better. Please plan on joining us!



Announcing

TEXAS CONFESSIONAL LUTHERAN FREE CONFERENCE XVI

to be held at
Grace Lutheran Church, Brenham, Texas

Friday & Saturday, September 9-10, 2005

Theme: "Contending for the Faith Once Delivered to the Saints"

AGENDA

Friday - Sept. 9, 2005	Saturday - Sept. 10, 2005
5:00-6:00 PM - Registration	7:30-8:00 AM - Coffee and Donuts
6:00-6:15 PM - Opening Devotion Rev. Andrew Simcak, Jr., TCL President	8:00-8:15 AM - Opening Devotion Rev. Andrew Simcak, Jr.
6:15-7:15 PM - "Contending for the Faith- Historical Perspective" Dr. Laurence White, Pastor, Our Savior Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas	8:15-9:00 AM - Continuation of "Present Challenges" Rev. Daniel Preus
7:15-7:30 PM - Questions & Answers	9:00-9:15 AM - Questions & Answers
7:30-7:45 PM - Break	9:15-9:30 AM - Break
7:45-8:45 PM - "Contending for the Faith- Present Challenges" Rev. Daniel Preus, Former First Vice President of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod	9:30-11:00AM- "Contending for the Faith- Future Outlook" Rev. Richard Bolland, Pastor, Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Kansas City, Missouri
8:45-9:00 PM - Questions & Answers	11:00-11:15 AM Questions & Answers
9:00-9:30 PM - Evening Suffrages Pastor Matthew Jacobs, Grace Lutheran Church, Brenham, Texas	11:15-11:30 AM Break
	11:30-12:15 PM Panel Discussion - Revs. Daniel Preus and Richard Bolland
	12:15 PM Closing Prayer, Adjournment and BBQ Lunch
	1:15 PM or Immediately after Lunch
	Concord Membership Meeting

A catered luncheon of barbeque and trimmings will be served at 12:15 PM on Saturday at a cost of \$6.00 per person. The cost for children under 12 will be \$3.00. Please order tickets in advance by sending a check payable to: TEXAS CONFESSIONAL LUTHERANS to Don Kaiser, 1327 Seaspray Court, Houston, Texas 77008. The tickets will be given out at the registration table at the conference. Orders for tickets need to be received in Houston no later than Wednesday, Sept. 7th, 2005, so that we can give an accurate count to the caterer. For further information, you can call either Don Kaiser at (713)862-2626 (Email - TxConfLuth@aol.com) or Paul Stringer at (713)682-7192 (Email - pdstring@sbcglobal.net).

RV PARK ACCOMODATIONS:

ARTESIAN PARK RV CAMPGROUNDS Sites: 50 gravel
 From Jct. US290 & 36N, 7.2 miles west on 290 22 ft. avg. width
 Good gravel interior roads 40 pull-thrus
 Facilities: Restrooms & showers, dump, security, pay phone, laundry

MOTEL DATA:

1. DAYS INN
 201 Loop 290 East
 Brenham, TX 77833-0400
 Phone: (979) 836-1110
 (888) 315-2378

2. RAMADA INN
 2217 S. Market
 Brenham, TX 77833
 Phone: (979) 836-1300
 (800) 2RAMADA

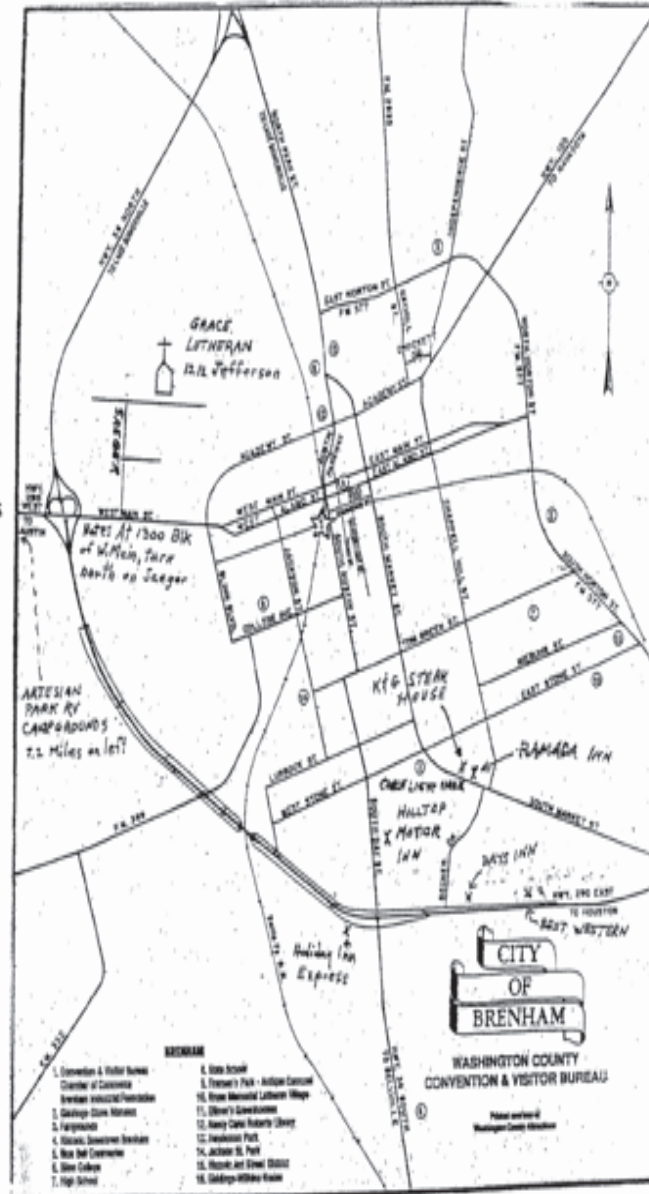
3. BEST WESTERN INN OF BRENHAM
 Loop 290 East
 Brenham, TX 77833
 Phone: (800) 528-1234
 (979) 251-7791

4. HOLIDAY INN EXPRESS
 555 Hwy 290W
 Brenham, TX 77833
 1-800-HOLIDAY
 (979) 836-4590

5. COACH LIGHT INN
 2242 S. Market
 Brenham, TX 77833
 Phone: (979) 836-5657

6. HILLTOP MOTOR INN
 2413 South Day
 Brenham, TX 77833
 Phone: (979) 836-7915
 (888) 672-1378

7. COMFORT SUITES
 2350 South Day
 Brenham, Tx. 77833
 979-421-8100
 1-800-4Choice
 www.choicehotels.com





Colorado Congregation Leaves Missouri Synod

As we have discussed previously, the process of 'realignment' going on within the Lutheran Church will almost certainly be a *long* one—and for many, a painful one. The doctrinal chaos within the established synods has spiritually injured many people in recent years. However, what is encouraging is that more people who desire to be faithful are becoming aware of how far the synods (and many of the congregations) have strayed from God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions.

Just prior to our recent trip to Boulder, Colorado, I received word that Divine Savior Lutheran Church in Niwot had become an independent Lutheran congregation. The fact that a congregation which had just become independent was only *nine miles* from where we were going to be anyway seemed like too much of a coincidence to be ignored, so I contact Pastor Bruce Russell to let him know we were going to be in town, and hoped to be with them on Sunday morning.

We had a thoroughly enjoyable visit with the saints at Divine Savior. Pastor Russell's Bible Class was an admirably in-depth study in the book of Job, and the class seemed quite eager to hear the Word. Over all, our impression was of a pastor and congregation which were striving to be faithful and attentive to the Word of God.

Such things should be able to be taken for granted in the Lutheran Church—as so it was, once. But no more. According to the documents the congregation provided, the LC—MS district president removed Pr. Russell

from the clergy roster, and then tried to force the congregation to remove the pastor from his call. The congregation, led by the understanding that their pastor had not violated his call, refused the district's demands, and was removed from the roster of the LC—MS. Naturally, all of this happened after a great deal of anguish was inflicted on the congregation.

Following our visit, I received a wonderful e-mail from a member of Divine Savior:

Dear Pastor Heiser,

Though we didn't have the chance to visit while you were here, I wanted to tell you how much all of us at Divine Savior appreciated your visit with us two weeks ago.

I didn't actually connect you and your congregation until after you had left. I well remember Salem's declaration of independence from the LCMS since it was the first of which I was aware following the 2004 convention and because it occurred on my birthday.

Having both you and Pastor *** (***) Lutheran Church, ***, WI) visit us on the same day, and having come despite (or because of) our current status vis a vis Synod, was a true blessing. It reminded all of us that we are not alone and that our brothers and sisters in Christ, many of whom we do not (yet) know, bear our burdens, offer encouragement and keep us in their prayers.

We trust that you and your family had a safe journey home.

We've just received notice that LCEF is demanding immediate repayment of our mortgage and expect soon that the Concordia 'Welfare' Plan [sic] will cancel our Pastor's medical and other insurances. While these are almost trifles relative to the assaults we have endured over the past couple of years, they are troubling as well for the saints here in Niwot. So, your presence among us and your kind words came at just the right moment!

May our Dear Savior bless you and your ministry as well as the saints assembled in Malone!

Kind regards,

In Christ, Greg Wickline

*(*** I have removed the names because our newsletter goes on the internet and we don't want to get this other pastor into trouble!—Pastor)*

We know that the life of the Church in this world is a life under the cross. We will certainly keep the saints at Divine Savior (Niwot, CO) in our prayers!
—Pastor Heiser