

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Malone, Texas

July 2005



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

Are you ready for a “tune up”? I don’t know about you, but I always dread watching the odometer counting up, knowing it won’t be too long before the next oil change... or worse. I love driving; but I don’t like going in for service.

It’s the nature of the things of this world that they’re always wearing out, going ‘out of date,’ or just breaking down. Even when everything is working like it’s supposed to, it still needs attention so it doesn’t develop a problem. This isn’t just true of machinery; it’s true for people, too. We learn new ways of doing things—or re-learn the old ways. Many professions require certifications which have to be updated. Pastors gather together for study of God’s Word, gaining insight from the learning of other men in the holy office, so that they, in turn, can better serve the saints entrusted to their care.

Are you ready for a “tune up”? For many, I’m sure it’s been a few years since you had the opportunity to review the Small Catechism, and things may have gotten a bit rusty. That’s why I’m offering a “refresher” course beginning July 10th which will meet every other week for six sessions.

There are some big differences, however, between this “tune up” and those we normally face out in the world. First, the Faith *never* needs to be ‘upgraded’—but our memory can be faulty. Second, the world’s “tune ups” are all in the realm of ‘Law’—something is broken; this “tune up” is mostly Gospel—a reminder of the loving care and salvation which the Holy Trinity has established for our redemption.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Heiser



To Pastor Heiser and my friends and family at Salem Church—

I want to thank each of you for all your kindness, concern, caring and prayers for me and my family at this sad time in our lives. I will continue to need your prayers and good wishes, but I know each day will get a little easier with the Lord's help.

Thank you,
Connie Bratcher
Brady
Kim, Brian and Cassidy

I want to thank everyone who said prayers for me, called me on the phone, visited me and sent flowers to me in the hospital and during my recuperation at home after my surgery.

Bless you all,
Rosemary Kruger

New Adult 'Refresher' Course begins July 10th

Has it been a while since you dusted off the catechism? Have the 'six chief parts' gotten a little... fuzzy?

Good news! Beginning July 10th, you have the opportunity to brush off the dust and get 'back to basics' (without any tests or confirmation examination!). Pastor is offering a six session 'refresher' course to review the catechism. This class is intended for *anyone* who has already been confirmed. (Seventeen members have already let us know they intend to attend!)

Sessions will be held biweekly (July 10, July 24, August 7, August 21, September 4 and September 18). We will meet right after divine service; we will have a brief, light lunch, and then have our review session (each review session will last approximately one hour).



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, MORRIS & ROSEMARY!

On June 18th, Morris and Rosemary Kruger celebrate their 50th anniversary. It was wonderful to see so many friends and family gather to join them in celebrating this occasion.

You Are Invited to VBS!

All children 14 years old and younger are invited to this year's Vacation Bible School. VBS will run from Monday through Friday evening, **July 11th through 15th**, from **6:30 until 8:30 p.m.** The VBS theme is "Lord, Have Mercy!" (It was developed by the same folks who created last year's VBS, which was a big 'hit' with both the kids and the teachers.) The lessons and crafts look like they will be a lot of fun!

Come and join us—and bring a friend!



Brunch Attendees Learn about the Mission Field

Don Schnell was the “guest speaker” at this year’s Fathers/ Mothers Brunch on May 21st, and he shared with us some of his experiences in the mission field of Papua New Guinea. Don’s presentation gave us a renewed appreciation for the blessings Christians take for granted in our own country, as well as a deeper understanding of the need for saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to be carried to the ends of the earth.



Congratulations to Heath and Heather Krueger, our most recent graduates of Bynum High School!

At the Bynum High School Awards Banquet, Heath and Heather received numerous awards:

Heath received the American Citizenship Award; the Government Course Award; the Citizenship Award; was on the “A” Honor Roll; One Act Play Crew; participated in Mathematics and Number Sense at the U.I.L. Academic Meet; basketball, where he received Honorable Mention-All District; and track, where he was an Area Qualifier. He was also named Best All Around Male; Mr. BHS and Distinguished Scholar; and was an Honor Graduate, graduating 3rd in his class.

Heather received the Citizenship Award; the Desktop Publishing Course Award; had Perfect Attendance; was on the “A-B” Honor Roll, One Act Play Crew; participated in volleyball, where she received 1st Team All District Honors; basketball, where she received co-Most Valuable Player Honors; and track, where she was a Regional Qualifier for the fourth consecutive year. She was also named Bynum’s Offensive Player of the Year in basketball; Bynum’s Female Athlete of the Year; and Distinguished Scholar. She graduated fourth in her class as an Honor Graduate.

Congratulations also to Lizzie Youngblood:

Like Heath and Heather, Lizzie also needed a wheelbarrow to get home with all of her awards!: Most Improved-Basketball; American Citizenship Award; Citizenship Award; English II Course Award; Varsity Volleyball—2nd Team All-District; High School Basketball—2nd Team All-District; Student Council-Sophomore Representative; U.I.L. Academics, Spelling and Vocabulary; One Act Play; and... received Letterman Jacket for basketball and volleyball.

And congratulations to Jana Schulz:

Jana’s grades have earned her a place in the National Honor Society. (Jana made the “A-B” Honor Roll.)



The Reverend Paul A. Siems
1937 S. Fern Street
Wichita, KS 67213-3543
(316) 264-5964
pastor@brideofchristelc.com † www.brideofchristelc.com

Saturday, May 14, 2005

James D. Heiser, Pastor
Salem Lutheran Church
718 HCR 3424 E
Malone, TX 76660

Dear Pastor Heiser and beloved brothers and sisters of our Lord Jesus Christ,

I was surprised to receive in the mail your very gracious and loving support gift. Pastor Heiser had told me when we were together at Pastor Hudson's installation that you all had planned on doing something for us. But wow!

What can we say but "Thank you!"

As you all are aware, we are a very tiny gathering of saints and **are** limited in many ways. Yet the LORD in His gracious mercy continues to feed us and **strengthen** us so that we are growing in our confidence in His grace, mercy and peace. While we remain small in number, our spirits have been blessed beyond measure. Freed from the bureaucratic chains with which we once willingly bound ourselves, now no one can keep us from what our LORD commands that we receive for our temporal and everlasting blessing. Surely you all **are** aware of the joys of which I speak, as you demonstrate with you love and gifts.

Your loving generosity has forced me to make an advance in our status as a congregation. Until yesterday we had no need for a bank account as we had no monies to handle. Since I receive no salary we have been able to function without a checking account. The dear saints naturally have offered their loving assistance, but in direct gifts rather than through more defined means. Whatever purchased that needed to be made I made. Being small does have certain benefits.

Now, however, through your love, new opportunities are before us. One immediate way in which your gift will be used is to purchase space with a web hosting company so as to be able to make audio sermons available in higher quality formats and to archive past audio sermons. I notice that Pastor Heiser started making audio sermons available, and in very good quality format, too. Now we will be able to do the same.

I am looking forward to the next conference of the pastors in our newly established communion in July. The saints at Bride of Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church are excited to know that another conference is scheduled. Perhaps the LORD will choose to add to our

number those who openly embrace not only us, but also the freedom of the Gospel that we enjoy. It seems amazing that a year will soon have passed since the Malone Statement was signed. It has brought much joy to us at Bride of Christ ELC to know that you and the others sister congregations stand with us and share with us in our Lord Christ.

Again we thank you,
Yours in Christ Jesus and His love,



Pastor Paul A. Siems
and the saints at Bride of Christ ELC

A Word of Thanks:

The work and support of the Church depends on so many people that (honestly) it's hard to remember everything that is done around here! It doesn't mean your efforts are taken for granted—it just means there's a lot (often more than some people realize) that gets done around Church. I know that there are many of you who also quietly go about your efforts to make things 'work.'

Some of the help, such as Tina Schnell and Patsy Williams faithfully playing the organ every week, is obvious, and greatly appreciated by everyone.

Many thanks to Charles Huse for fixing the ropes on the bell tower—the steel cables will probably last as long as the tower. Thanks to Lee Boortz for fixing the toilet in the women's bathroom and to Alvin Ender for keeping up with the lights that need replacement, and for keeping the plumbing working. Thank you, Kenny Kelm, for mowing the fields, especially during this busy season in the fields. Many thanks also to Donna Huse, for putting the calendar together every month, and to Lodie Banik and Tony Zettler for folding bulletins. Thank you, Denise and Terri Kelm, for faithfully teaching the children in Sunday School. Thanks also to Dorothy Markwardt for keeping attendance and communion records up to date. And all of us appreciate the hard work Billy & Kay Watson do cleaning around Church.

Again, many thanks to everyone who helps out! The Lord bless you for your labors in service to Christ in His Church!

Pastor Heiser

Trinity Lutheran (Austin) Enters “State of Confession” Against LC—MS

At its regular voters meeting, Trinity Lutheran Church in Austin declared itself to be in a State of Confession against the false doctrine which now reigns in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The congregation identified the following six false teachings in its statement:

“We have identified six points in which the LCMS is teaching and/or tolerating falsehood.

“1. Although the LCMS officially professes the historic and Scriptural teaching of closed communion, many congregations within the LCMS practice some form of open communion without being disciplined. In our Synodical President’s convention reports he minimizes the present false practices as being only differing practical applications.

“2. Although the LCMS Constitution and bylaws requires the “exclusive use of doctrinally pure agenda, hymnbooks, and catechisms,” many congregations are being encouraged to follow the false revivalistic worship of the Reformed without being disciplined. Our Synodical President has been heavily promoting Contemporary Worship from within his Synodically approved Ablaze! Program. His convention reports consider Contemporary Worship to be acceptable practical applications. The 2004 Convention Resolution 2-04 has directed the Commission on Worship toward “the development of diverse worship.”

“3. Although the LCMS Constitution requires the “renunciation of unionism and syncretism of every description,” our Synodical President approved of the participation of District President Benke in a unionistic and syncretistic service at Yankee Stadium. Since that time, as well as in his sermon and reports to the 2004

Convention, he continues to maintain publicly that his decision was correct, and furthermore, that his decision is the “position of the LCMS.” The 2004 Convention passed Resolution 3-06A, “To Commend the CTCR Document Guidelines for Participation in Civic Events” (GPCE) which effectively denies the existence of syncretism by claiming that Christian and non-Christian clergy could “take turns” offering prayers without it being joint worship.

“4. At the Synodical Convention in Wichita(1989), the unscriptural office of “lay minister” was created in direct violation of Augsburg Confession XIV. Instead of putting an end to the practice as was recommended by 2001 Resolution 3-08(and endorsed by our seminaries), a substitute resolution 3-08B endorsed and continued this practice. With the passage of 2004 Resolution 5-09, the Convention directs “the Synod in convention recognize, affirm, and encourage the work of the Districts in developing ministry-equipping programs for laity.” Those who publicly teach in the Church or administer the sacraments are no longer required to be called and ordained clergymen.

“5. With the passage of 2004 Convention Resolution 3-08A, “To Affirm the Conclusions of the 1994 CTCR Report: The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices,” our Synod has changed its official teaching on the “order of creation” (that a woman is not “to have authority over a man,” 1 Timothy 2:12), and thereby approved women to serve in every humanly established office, including elder and congregational chairman.

“6. With the passage of 2004 Resolution 8-01A, “Ecclesiastical Supervision and Dispute Resolution,” widespread changes in the process removed a

congregation's and pastor's right to initiate formal proceedings so that each member of Synod is held to the Word of God. Now that power lies solely in the discretion of the District Presidents and Synodical President. Furthermore, the rulings of the Committee on Constitutional Matters that the prior approval of an ecclesiastical supervisor precludes the possibility of a member being disciplined for wrong doing were approved by the Synodical Convention. The Word of God is no longer the "only rule and norm of faith and life" in the LCMS."

Such a Statement of Confession is a very serious matter. As the congregation declares: " A Statement of Confession is an extended call to repent, an urgent warning, which if unheeded will result in breaking altar and pulpit fellowship." The statement sets forth a three year time period for urging the synod to repent (just as Salem and other Keller Resolution congregations spent several years calling upon Rev. Kieschnick and Rev. Benke and their advocates to repent). The congregation also declared:

The above six points are not occasional errors that are in the process of being corrected. Either these false doctrines have been approved by our Synod in Convention and become the new "official teaching," or on account of their widespread practice and corresponding lack of discipline, they should be considered the de facto teaching of our Synod. Those who desire to continue to have fellowship with us need to disavow these new false teachings. In keeping with God's Word, that we not participate (share) with those who do not continue to hold to the Apostolic teaching, we hereby declare that from June 28, 2005 we are in a state of confession against these errors. If these errors are not addressed 'in due time', we will refuse altar and pulpit fellowship with those who err in these six points or with those who practice fellowship with those

who err in these six points. Those who teach, practice and support false teachings include not only those who actively announce their acceptance of falsehood, but also those who by refusing to take a stand show that they either agree with the falsehood or show by their toleration that they do not consider the false teaching to be important.

The congregation will now share its Statement of Confession with other LC—MS congregations in the area, and begin following the procedures set forth for being in a State of Confession.

We will keep Pastor Harris and the saints at Trinity in our prayers as they pursue this effort. As it seems inconceivable (humanly speaking) that the LC—MS will repent of a single one of these errors (let alone all of them), the path ahead for Pastor Harris and Trinity Lutheran Church seems quite clear. We encountered a similar situation with the Keller Resolution; nevertheless, for the sake of conscience, and for the sake of those who are caught up in unrepentant sin, it is best that they make this effort.

Pastoral Colloquium to Meet in Niles, Michigan

The pastors who signed the Malone Statement will gather in Niles, Michigan for a pastoral colloquium July 19th through 21st. (St. Boniface Lutheran Church is the hosting congregation for this meeting.) The meeting will also be attended by several pastoral guests.

The topic for the colloquium is the doctrine of the Church (ecclesiology): what is the Church; the ways in which Christ sustains the Church; the proper structure of the Church, etc. Time will also be set aside for discussing possibilities for further work, such as possible arrangements for seminary education, mission prospects, and the possibility of other congregations joining our fellowship.