

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Malone, Texas

June-July 2006



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

What a whirlwind of activity.—and yet what a joy! One hundred and twenty years of God's grace—what a gift to celebrate... and celebrate we did. I cannot even begin to list everything that everyone did to make it all possible. Please accept my heartfelt thanks for all the labors, great and small. The Theological Colloquium and Pastoral Conference also went extremely well, and, again, this happened because so many worked together to the glory of God.

A lot has happened, and I have great hopes for what the Lord accomplished among us. Working together, we have come to an further clear statements of agreement among those of our fellowship. We have made important steps toward mission congregations in several (perhaps three or four?) states. Just since our meeting, I have been contacted by several pastors who intend to leave their present, heterodox synod so that they may be joined to our orthodox fellowship. (Suffice to say we are going to *need* the Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund which so many of you have helped Salem to begin to build...) And, we have a (Lord-willing) 'workable' plan for a seminary.

To encourage our work together, the pastors agreed that for proper cooperation and coordination of our efforts a formal organization among the clergy would be helpful, and yet we were also mindful of the need to continue to protect the congregations entrusted to our care from inappropriate outside interference. Toward these ends, the pastors have organized themselves into a 'diocese'—the Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America (or ELDoNA). This was seen as the next proper step to build on the fellowship arrangement which was established among the pastors several years ago, and it gives a greater element of mutual accountability within our fellowship. Thus the pastors decided that it would be one among them who would have the responsibility of oversight—a Superintendent/Bishop. By unanimous vote, the other pastors of the diocese (Hudson, Hunter, Rutowicz and Totten) extended a call to me to serve in this capacity.

I take up this responsibility with a measure of trepidation; as I told the brethren, I am not distinguished from them by either length of service, nor ad-

vanced academic work. The brethren were, however, quite insistent that I accept this responsibility. I also heeded the counsel of our two elders who were in attendance, who echoed the call of the pastors.

What does this mean for Salem? It means that I will continue serve here precisely as I have sought to do for the past eight years; it just means that my brothers in the holy ministry will also expect that I serve them, and (among other things) offer such guidance and counsel as I may, and assist others in joining our fellowship.

Please pray for Salem, for our fellowship, and for the Lord's blessings on all of us as we press forward. With God, all things are possible.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Heiser

Schedule for July

Sunday, July 2	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School/Adult Bible Class
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service-Holy Communion
	after service	Picnic sponsored by Women's Guild
	after service	Church Council
Tuesday, July 4	10:30 a.m.	4 th of July Matins
Wednesday, July 5:	11:00 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class-Psalms
Sunday, July 9:	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service-Holy Communion
	11:30 a.m.	Board of Education
	6:30-8:30 p.m.	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
MONDAY-THURS.	6:30-8:30 p.m.	VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
Wednesday, July 12:		NO MIDWEEK CLASS
Saturday, July 15:	8 a.m.	Men's Fellowship Breakfast
	8 a.m.	Women's Guild Meeting
	9 a.m.	Board of Trustees
Sunday, July 16:	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service-Holy Communion
	11:30 a.m.	Potluck
	1 p.m.	voters meeting
Wednesday, July 19:		NO MIDWEEK CLASS
Sunday, July 23:	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Catechetical Service
Wednesday, July 26:	11 a.m.	Midweek Bible Class-Psalms
Sunday, July 30:	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Divine Service
	11:30 a.m.	Altar Guild

July Birthdays:

1st: Michael Degner
5th: Donna Huse, Sherry Huse
6th: Tina Schnell
8th: Kay Watson, Edmond Flores
11th: Dean Degner, Bobby Huse
13th: Rachel Kunkel
19th: Kenneth Kelm
20th: Justin Picha
23rd: Kyle Bow
24th: Larry Hackett
30th: Earlene Huse
31st: Alvin Ender, Melvin Ender

July Anniversaries:

12th: Arthur & Esther Reinke
23rd: David & Tina Bow

CONGRATULATIONS! ... to Kenny Kelm, who, out of the freshman class, was awarded Chapter Star Greenhand Award at the Bynum FFA banquet!

... to Del Schulz, who graduated this year from Bynum High School. Well done, Del!



Pastor Heiser,

Please convey my thanks to your wonderful congregation for the welcome they gave to us "foreigners." They absolutely went beyond the normal welcome to strangers, but accepted us as brothers in Christ. It was indeed heart warming to be amongst a group of true Christians. I look forward to the opportunity to join with you and your

wonderful congregation in the future.

In the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,

Bill Kope
(Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Harrison, AR)



Dear Pastor,

My 84-year-old mother, Rufina Lentz Lange, was confirmed at Salem Luthern in the 1930s while she was living at the farm of her uncle, Emil Lentz. Sometime after her confirmation, she moved to Los Angeles to live with her older brother and sister, Fred and Leonora Lentz. She told me that it took only a week in a Los Angeles city high school to lose the Texas drawl but she remains a Texan in her heart. (She rooted for Texas to win the Rose Bowl game even though my brother/her son is a USC graduate.)

My mother never talked a lot about her life in Malone until recently when her health started to fail. I got curious about the Hill County region and found your wonderful website. I printed the articles and read them to her yesterday [May 5]. (Her eyesight is very poor from macular degeneration.) She was pleased to hear her grandfather, F. G. Lentz, was listed as one of the founding members of the church in the article from the cookbook and giggled at hearing Rev. Gaertner's name and talked about his German confirmation classes and services and the time she got into trouble with him for wearing lipstick! The article gave me insight into why my 85-year-old father and I were unable to communicate with her a couple of months ago when she was ill with bronchitis. She told us later that she was saying the prayers she learned in Malone -- in German.

Your internet website not only gave my mother great joy but it also gave me an opportunity to connect with a part of my ancestry that I know very little about. Please feel free to share this message with your congregation.

God bless you and, of course God bless Texas!

*Ellen Lange Adams
Los Angeles, California*

Greetings to the Saints of Salem!

Thank you *again* for your wonderful and gracious hospitality toward all of us who came to help you celebrate Salem's 120th anniversary.

It was so good to see y'all again! I hope for another opportunity real *soon*.

Enclosed is a little thankoffering for your Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund, given in your honor, to the glory of our gracious God and Savior. Peace to you all!

*Pastor Ahonen
St. John Lutheran Church, Ladysmith, WI*

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Soon you will be celebrating your one hundred twentieth year of experiencing God's many blessings, and fellow Lutherans from across the country will have the privilege of joining you at your Theological Colloquium. The preparations for these events doubtless mean additional labor for many of you, but also exceptional joy.

Since I have never before visited your congregation, there are many unique aspects of your congregation's history, such as the architecture of your worship facility or the number of baptisms performed in your midst, to which I cannot testify. But what I can testify to is what we already have in common, which I am bold to say is more important than any peculiarity of geography or statistics. The Hymn of the Day appointed for the Sunday of your anniversary, by felicitous coincidence composed by Martin Luther, speaks of the Holy Spirit's "graces now outpoured on each believer's mind and heart." These include love, faith, unity, service, and strength, all of which must be in abundance among you because the same Spirit has caused "the Word of Life to shine" among you for a dozen decades.

Holy Scripture does not ask us to pay God back for such gifts, but simply to receive them, give thanks for them, and celebrate their extension to people "of every land and every tongue." May this prayer of your ancestors also be yours, always:

Lord, by Thy power prepare each heart
And to our weakness strength impart
That bravely here we may contend,
Through life and death to Thee, our Lord, ascend.
Yours in Christ,

*The Rev. Dr. Michael R. Totten
St. Laurence Lutheran Church, San Lorenzo, CA*

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We at St. Peter's rejoice with you as you celebrate 120 years of ministry in the Malone area. Your ministry is greatly appreciated and we pray that the Lord may continue to bless you all as you serve Him and His church in the years to come.

Yours in Christ,

*Rev. Allen Johannes
St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Malone, TX*

Women's Guild and Men's Fellowship

It has been many months since these groups have contributed to Salem's newsletter. Both groups continue to support the Salem Radio Ministry, the Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund and individuals with temporary and ongoing needs. Not long ago the ladies of the Women's Guild held a bake sale in the Narthex of the church. We appreciate all those who baked, sold, bought and ate those goodies. There is a good chance this will appear again, especially around the holidays.

In recognition of Mother's Day the Men's Fellowship provided flowers to the ladies of the congregations. Surely every woman loves to be recognized and flowers hit the spot. In like fashion the Women's Guild presented the men of the congregation a pocket cross and prayer card for Father's Day. This feels like a great tradition and hopefully the Men's Fellowship will continue to lead this mutual appreciation.

Our next meeting is scheduled for July 15th. A breakfast is provided at 8:00 a.m. followed by devotion/meetings of the Women's and Men's groups.

—Pam Krumvieda

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

The Board of Education is preparing for Vacation Bible School. This year's program is "Take Up the Cross". This series focuses on the battles Jesus fought for us against sin, death, and the devil. All children and adults are welcome to come and learn. The schedule for this year is Sunday, July 9th through Thursday, July 13th. Each day begins at 6:30 p.m. and wraps up at 8:30 p.m. Each day a snack will be provided and Thursday a dinner will be served. If you have any questions or want to join the VBS volunteers contact Pam Krumvieda or Denise Heiser.



Reborn in Christ Jesus—Kolton Brian Buth received the forgiveness of sins through the Sacrament of Holy Baptism on May 28th.



An enjoyable day was had at Scarborough on Memorial Day...
and we can't wait for next year!

SALEM'S 120TH ANNIVERSARY!



The new banner Penny Payne made for the anniversary



Pastor Rutowicz (St. Boniface-Niles, MI) was our anniversary speaker



Everyone enjoyed the wonderful BBQ dinner after the service



Some of the delicious deserts prepared for the dinner...



*Weldon, Tina
and Morris
entertained
everyone
during the
meal*



Salem has enjoyed the blessings of the Lord across the generations.



Two beautiful new church signs on 171 and 308... our thanks the Cliff Krumvieda for overseeing this project and those who have given to the reimburse the cost.



Saying "Goodbye" ("Farvel") to Maria Torressen: Maria left for Norway on June 16th, her year as an exchange student at Bynum having passed faster than any of us expected. She'll be missed! (Hopefully, we'll see her back in America before too long...) On June 11th, several families took Maria out for a "fare-well" dinner, and then travelled to St. Olaf's Lutheran Church.

Theological Colloquium and Pastoral Conference



Some of the attendees at the Colloquium on June 5th...

What a joy it was to gather with likeminded Lutherans to study God's Word and the Lutheran Confessions! What a joy to learn more of the history of Christ's Church, and to study her "sung confession" which she makes in her hymns! All of these topics were taken up as pastors and laity gathered for the Theological Colloquium here at Salem on June 5th. (The full roster of speakers and their topics are on the facing page.)

Several pastors commented following the Colloquium and Conference that this was the best conference they had attended in years... whether at circuit, district, or synod level. We thank the Holy Trinity for the gracious gift of having the opportunity for study.

All of the pastors who participated are eager for the next opportunity for us to gather for study—perhaps in January, perhaps next Summer. But all of us rejoice at the unity which the Lord establishes among His people, and we pray He will continue to to guide and strengthen us.



Dr Heimbigner: "Neo-Donatism and Sacramental Monkeys"



Pr. Hudson: "Diognetus and the Third Race"



Dr. Totten: "Habeas Corpus"



Pr. Stefanski: "How Holy is Sanctification?"



Pr. Ahonen: "Setting the Table in the North"



Pr. Heiser: "The Influence of Hermeticism in the 16th and 17th Centuries"



Malone Theses
Agreed to:
06 June A. D. 2006

In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Building upon the Niles Theses of A.D. 2005, we, the undersigned, wish to further clarify our common beliefs concerning controverted issues facing the Evangelical Lutheran Church in our day. We all agree that these stated positions are our firmly held convictions, and in conformity with Holy Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, and we wish to have fellowship with all others who teach and confess the same.

Liturgy

It is our desire to see Lutherans adopt a more fully liturgical, sacramental, and historic divine service. We wish to promote a more truly catholic practice among the saints entrusted to our care, and clearly distinguish ourselves from the 'Protestantizing' practices which dominate so much of the American Lutheran church. Therefore, we all agree that:

1) We seek to achieve a high degree of uniformity in the liturgical expression of our theological agreement among the parishes of our signators. Significant deviation in liturgical practice between parishes is confusing to the members of the Church. Therefore, we commit ourselves to endeavor over time, by common consensus, to minimize local deviations from common practice.

2) We recognize that Lutherans in other countries observe different elements in the rite of the divine service. Lutherans in traditionally Eastern Orthodox lands may have different liturgical traditions from Lutherans in the West. However, we reject any effort to institute Eastern elements which would violate Formula of Concord article 10, that is, which give the appearance of doctrinal unity where no such unity exists.

Office of the Ministry

It is our desire to fully re-establish the confessional understanding of the office of the ministry within the Lutheran Church. Therefore, we reject all

'functionalist' misconceptions of the office of the ministry. Therefore, we all agree that:

3) Laymen ought not preach or read sermons at the divine service. Laymen are not to administer the sacraments of the Church. Emergency baptism is the only exception to this rule. (AC 14)

4) The Church, corporately, possesses the office of the ministry. Our Lord Jesus Christ gave the office of the keys to the whole Church. That office is conferred upon men by the Church through call and ordination.

Episcopacy

It is our desire to conform ourselves to the dominant practice of the Church throughout all time on the issue of polity. We wish to distinguish ourselves from the democratic mind-set that is dominant in the Lutheran churches in America. It is the overwhelming witness of the church catholic that Episcopacy has been the accepted polity in the Church. Therefore, we all agree that:

5) We recognized that a truly Evangelical Episcopacy is set forth as the preferred polity of the Evangelical Lutheran Church as taught in the Augsburg Confession (XXVIII), the Apology (XXVIII), and the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope.

6) We seek the restoration of the historic, preferred polity—that is, the offices of Bishop, Presbyter, and Deacon—within the one divinely-established office of the ministry as local circumstances warrant.

Nomenclature

The variations in terminology used to refer to occupants of the ministry and various lay officers in congregations has led to increasing confusion on the Church. While there is no law to be made regarding the terminology by which we reference offices and officeholders not established by God's Word, uniformity of usage would contribute to the teaching and preservation of correct doctrine throughout the Church. Therefore, we agree that:

7) We will endeavor to use terminology/nomenclature in the same way both in our teaching and in our parish structure.

Infant Communion

As pastors, we take seriously our responsibility to serve as “stewards of the mysteries of God.” No matter how ‘interesting’ and ‘clever’ new theories may be, we reject and avoid practices that are completely unknown to the history and practice of the Church of the Augsburg Confession. Therefore, we all agree that:

8) We reject the practice of infant communion. We reject the practice of the Eastern churches which commune infants at the time of baptism. We also reject the practice of communing small children who have not been examined and absolved. We hold to article 25 of the Augsburg Confession, which says, “The custom has been retained among us of not administering the sacrament to those who have not previously been examined and absolved.”

9) We reject infant communion because it undermines the pastoral responsibility to examine those who present themselves for communion. It also does not help the communicant learn the practice of self-examination. We further reject it because it has no Lutheran precedent. And finally, the erosion of pastoral examination of communicants involved in infant communion is the same as that erosion caused by the practice of open communion.

10) We also encourage the maintenance of, or restoration into our parishes of, private confession and absolution (AC XI) as a helpful practice in preparation for reception of the sacrament.

Images

It has become sadly evident that there is a need to make a clear distinction between the doctrine and practices of the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the churches of Eastern Orthodoxy. Our fellowship eschews any appearance of “Easternizing.” Therefore, we all agree that:

11) We reject the teaching that icons or statues or any sort of image are means of grace.

12) We, as Lutherans, embrace images as tools for piety and aids in the honoring and worship of our Lord Jesus Christ. They are also valuable tools in honoring of the saints. Images—especially the crucifix—have always been an important part of the life of the Church.

13) We recognize that in the Western Church, statuary and paintings have

been an important part of the life of the Church. We encourage the use of statuary and paintings in the Church in order that they may help draw the Christian's mind to our Lord and His grace.

14) We recognize the recent use of Eastern style icons in the worship life of the Lutheran Church as an alien element in Western Lutheran churches. We reject the veneration of icons or images in the Lutheran Church.

15) We agree with the conclusions of the Blessed Martin Chemnitz regarding the Seventh Ecumenical Council and its advocacy of adoring images. He condemned this council's decree on adoration of images, whether icons or other types of images: "The chief point is that at this synod it was decreed, contrary to the clear statement of Scripture, and contrary to the unanimous testimony of all antiquity, that sacred images are to be honored, venerated, saluted, embraced, kissed, worshiped, and adored." (Ex. pp. 115-116.)

These theses, and those agreed to in Niles, Michigan are not seen by us as additions to our vows to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, which vows are unconditional. These theses may change as the issues are further clarified. However, we do see them as defining the limits of our fellowship with regard to these issues until such time as we are convinced otherwise from the Scriptures and Lutheran Confessions, or until further clarification is needed. We are keenly aware of the fluid nature of such statements. We are also keenly aware of the clear lines of distinction they draw among those who call themselves Lutherans, and we intend to draw such lines.

Many of the matters addressed by these theses are not matters that are divisive of fellowship (episcopacy, liturgy, etc.). We, in our fellowship, voluntarily agree to abide by these theses for the well being of our parishes. These theses are not a declaration of fellowship. Those inside our fellowship voluntarily agree with these theses and support them. But we also wish to have these theses function as a marker of agreement between Christians who are not yet necessarily in fellowship. Therefore, we invite all who agree with these theses to express their agreement without necessarily committing themselves to fellowship.

We hope and pray that these theses will be yet another building

block in establishing a more healthy and orthodox Lutheran Church in our time, and in this country. With this hope, we with joy and profound thanks to our triune God, accept and confess these theses.

Rev. C. D. Hudson
Rev. Michael Henson
William Kope
Rick Grogan
Rev. Donald R. Hunter
Rev. Eric Stefanski
Rev. Michael R. Totten
Don Schnell
Carl Payne
Rev. James Heiser



Enjoying one of the many wonderful meals which the ladies prepared for us, from Monday through Wednesday!

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.salemchurch.net>

