

*The*  
*Concordia*  *Lutheran*

“The Scripture cannot be broken.” John 10:35.

“Thy Word is a Lamp unto my feet, and a Light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105.


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“The glory of  
the Lord is  
risen upon  
thee!”

—Isaiah 60:1b

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## *The Manifestation of Gods Grace Is the GLORY of His Church*

*“Arise, shine; for thy Light is come,  
and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!” —Isaiah 60:1*



The Christian Church traditionally marks the **Epiphany of our Lord** on January 6th, the day on which we celebrate His **manifestation** to the Wise Men from the East. For that reason, the Feast of our Savior’s Epiphany has been called “*the GENTILES’ Christmas*” as His light appeared to those eastern sages from a far-off heathen land and led them to worship at His feet. We, who, like them, are **Gentiles** (or non-Jews), specially treasure this festival of the church year because of its particular comfort to **us**, whose ancestors were “*aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world*” (Ephesians 2:12). For the promised Messiah was intended from the beginning to be not only the Redeemer of **Israel** but “*a Light to lighten the Gentiles*” (as the aged Simeon also sang of Him, Luke 2:32), the Savior of the **world**; and for God’s unspeakable Christmas Gift of love to **us** poor **Gentiles** we, therefore, are and ought ever to be truly thankful!

Isaiah’s Epiphany prophecy, the first six verses of his 60<sup>th</sup> chapter, as summarized in the title-text above, is, much more than a divinely-inspired prediction of the Savior’s manifestation to the Wise Men from the East, who came with their camels and dromedaries to worship the newborn King of the Jews and to present unto Him costly gifts, two of which Isaiah mentions specifically (v. 6). Indeed, Isaiah speaks to the believers of the Old Testament, the “true Israel” (Romans 9:6-8) which confided in the promises of God’s Messiah to come, and reminds them that the glorious light of the Gospel, manifesting God’s gracious forgiveness, was already theirs, and had already delivered them from the darkness of spiritual ignorance and despair as surely as if the Savior had already come. And, since those Old Testament Scriptures, Paul tells us, “*were written for OUR learning*” (Romans 15:4), Isaiah’s prophecy de-

clares for **us today**, for the Savior's **New Testament Church**, just as wonderfully as it did for the Lord's **Old Testament Zion**, that the manifestation of God's grace in Christ Jesus is the GLORY of His Church. Its glorious LIGHT has shined upon **us** in the Gospel; its glorious MESSAGE is **ours** to beam forth to others; and its glorious FRUIT is evident in **all** who have been brought to saving faith in its comfort.

Just as the Lord Jesus in Matthew 25 pictures His **New Testament Church** as ten sleeping virgins, waiting for the appearance of the Bridegroom but, in the meantime, succumbing to fleshly spiritual boredom when His second visible advent does not come quickly enough to suit their fancy, the Prophet Isaiah sees the very same imagery in the Church of the **Old Testament**. After all, it had been well over three thousand years since the Lord had promised His Messiah to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and some two thousand years since He had established His covenant of Grace with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob on the basis of that same promise. No doubt many in Israel had scoffed at the Messianic prophecies, as the Apostle Peter in his Second Epistle quotes the scoffers in the **end times** as saying: "*Where is the promise of His coming? For, since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation!*" (II Peter 3:4). They were not content to await with patience the coming of God's Messiah in "*the fullness of the time*" (Galatians 4:4).

But, as if shaking the drowsy virgins from their spiritual sleep, Isaiah cries out: "*Arise!*" Wake up! "*Thy Light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee!*" Indeed, while "*the darkness* [of wickedness, of spiritual ignorance, and of unbelief] had "*cover[ed] the earth and gross darkness the people,*" the **glorious LIGHT** of the Gospel had already been manifested **to Israel** in "*the oracles of God*" (Romans 3:1-2), in the Holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, as a special advantage. He had committed unto His people of old, long before the promised Savior was to arrive, "*the word of reconciliation*" (II Corinthians 5:19b), the precious good news of the Gospel declared to Adam and Eve, to the patriarchs, and to all His people through Moses and the prophets. Sadly, there were many who, because of their despisal of God's grace, sat engulfed in the same "*gross darkness*" that covered the heathen round about them. And others, because "*the fullness of the time*" was so long in coming, got tired of the long wait and fell into spiritual indifference and complacency, taking the Messianic promises for granted. Thus their droopy eyelids had blocked out the "**light**" of the Gospel and kept them ignorant of the very salvation that was already theirs by promise.

But the prophet's wake-up call goes out to **US as well** in his Epiphany cry; for the glorious "**LIGHT**" of God's grace in Christ Jesus has also been shined upon **us**, His Church of the **New Testament**. And Isaiah bids **us likewise** to "*arise*" and take note of its brilliance, lest we, like Israel of old, miss "*the glory of the Lord*" which "*is risen upon [us]*" in the person of "*the Sun of Righteousness*" (Malachi 4:2) and "*the Day Star*" (II Peter 1:19), Christ Jesus, our Savior! St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, reminds also **us** that "*God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness [on the first day of creation], hath shined in **OUR hearts**, to give the **LIGHT** of the knowledge of the **GLORY OF GOD** in the face of Jesus Christ*" (II Corinthians 4:6). God's **eternal decree of redemption**, in which He purposed to save lost mankind by the death of His Son, was, before the foundation of the world already, the expression of His unfathomable grace which has ever since redounded to **His glory!** For, in accordance with that plan, God, in eternity, seeing in His omniscience the completed active and passive obedience of His only-begotten Son in the place of sinners as satisfying His divine justice, "*reconciled the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*" (II Corinthians 5:19).

And the precious NEWS of that reconciliation, the Gospel that gives all "**glory to God in the highest**" (Luke 2:14) has been "*committed unto US*" (II Corinthians 5:19b), His Church, as the repository of the light of salvation. "*The glory of the Lord is risen upon **THEE**,*" Isaiah tells **you**. Do you **see** it?? Do you **recognize** it?? Do you **rejoice** in it and **confide** in it?? "*Arise,*" he exhorts us who confidently cling to God's Messiah! Sit up and take notice with gratitude that our gracious God, for Jesus' sake, has "*called US **out of darkness into His marvelous LIGHT**,*" so that **by faith** in His gracious Gift of Love to us poor, wretched, undeserving sinners, **we** may have comfort, peace, joy, and hope in Christ Jesus, our precious Savior and no longer "*sit in darkness and in the shadow of death*" (Luke 1:79) because of our sins!

But that glorious "*Light*" is not only for **US**, even though it has been shed upon Christ's Church in His Kingdom of Grace for the special comfort and assurance of His believing children. Isaiah says that "*[God's] glory shall be **SEEN** upon thee.*" Christ's Church is a brightly illuminated "*city that is set on an hill,*" Jesus tells us in Matthew 5, a city that "*cannot be hid.*" Indeed, the glory of God's grace in Christ Jesus, manifested in His Church, is to function as a beacon of hope to **all** "*that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.*" Therefore Isaiah not only tells the Church to "*arise*" out of its lethargy and spiritual sleep to

bask in and appreciate the Light bestowed upon it, but also to “*shine*” — to beam forth that precious Light also to others.

Contrary to the devilish teaching of the Calvinists that the grace of God is NOT intended for **all** mankind, and that God does not “seriously” extend it to **all** in the Gospel, the Apostle Paul declares in his second letter to Timothy that “[*God*] will have *ALL MEN to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth*” (2:4). And Peter assures us that “*the Lord is...not willing that ANY should perish, but that ALL should come to repentance*” (II Peter 3:9). Therefore the Lord Jesus commands us to “*preach the Gospel to EVERY CREATURE*” (Mark 16:15). “*Arise, SHINE! ...and the GENTILES shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising*” (Isaiah 60:3).

All we have to do is to look about us in the world to see the teeming millions, here in our own country, as well as abroad, who are “*sit[ting] in darkness and in the shadow of death,*” ignorant of the Gospel of salvation! But if we “*shine,*” if we make it our **priority**, as a spiritual search-and-rescue team, to **beam forth** the GLORIOUS MESSAGE of God’s grace in Christ Jesus to souls lost in the maze of error and unbelief, our “*city,*” God’s Zion, His precious Church, will “*not be hid.*” Isaiah says in verse 4 of this prophecy: “*Lift up thine eyes round about and see: All they gather themselves together; they come to thee. Thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side.*” “Open your eyes! You’ll see,” says Isaiah. “*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*” (Romans 10:17). **That’s** how the Church grows! **That’s** how the Lord draws sinners unto Himself! **That’s** how His family of believers is enlarged! **That’s** how God’s adopted “*sons*” and “*daughters*” are brought into His household of faith “*from far,*” from the least likely and far away places, to be “*nursed at thy side,*” to be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord in the Church of the Lord Jesus, fed only wholesome spiritual food and given to drink of the pure water of life!

—It is noteworthy right here also to observe the fact that the Wise Men were not led to the Savior merely by a strange “*star*” that appeared “*in the east,*” but by the prophecy of **God’s Word** in Numbers chapter 24, apparently left by God’s people in the archives of Babylon when they returned from their captivity. The prophecy identified the star as “*His star,*” signaling the birth of “*the king of the Jews*” (Matthew 2:2). It was the **Word of God** whereby the Holy Spirit moved the Wise Men to seek their Savior, led them to Jerusalem to find *another* Word of God

pointing them to Bethlehem, and identified Him as their gracious King and the proper object of their worship.

And when we thus beam forth to others the glorious light of the Gospel, Isaiah says to the Church (v. 5): “...*Then shalt thou see, and flow together, and thine heart shalt fear, and be enlarged, because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee.*” There is nothing as gratifying to a child of God than to “*see*” the joy and gladness, the peace and hope, that the precious Gospel of God’s grace in Christ Jesus works in those who had never heard it, in those who had been deprived of it, in those who had been led astray from it by “*wolves in sheep’s clothing*” (Matthew 7:15). Our own hearts as Christians leap with joy when we witness the glorious comfort that the Gospel works in hearts that heretofore were languishing in spiritual darkness, in terror of God, and in the expectation of His wrath!

And we note yet from Isaiah’s words the GLORIOUS **FRUIT** that is evident in all who have been brought to saving faith by the light of the Gospel. Not only does the Gospel, regularly and consistently proclaimed by the Church, specifically by Christ’s ambassador in every local church or congregation, bring forth the *spiritual* fruit promised in Isaiah 55, verses 10 and 11, namely, **true faith unto salvation**; but it also produces the fruits OF faith, visible evidence that men can **see**, “*good works*” (Matthew 5:16) that bear testimony to what is resident in the heart of every true believer, works that redound to the glory of God’s grace. Paul writes to the Ephesians: “*We are HIS workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*” (2:10). And the Lord Jesus says concerning such evidence of fruit to the glory of God: “*Herein is My Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be My disciples*” (John 15:8). Fruit, not merely of quality but also in quantity (I Thessalonians 4:1) is the evidence of discipleship. Isaiah speaks of this fruit in verse 6 of his Epiphany prophecy when he says: “*The multitude of camels shall cover thee, the dromedaries of Midian and Ephah; all they from Sheba shall come; they shall bring gold and incense; and they shall show forth the praises of the Lord.*”

Because of the mention of “*camels and dromedaries,*” of “*gold and incense,*” these words are regarded as specifically prophetic of the Wise Men and their gifts. But they are certainly also more than that in their description of the **fruit** that the Gospel produces in the hearts of believers. Note that the

“camels and dromedaries,” as modes of long-distance travel, and the “coming” of a “multitude” of them, indicate as a fruit of faith the **eagerness** of believers to come and hear God’s Word. Believers don’t have to be “dragged” kicking and screaming to church services, to Bible classes, and to other opportunities for hearing and learning the Word of God, for growing in grace and in the knowledge of their Savior. Their **desire** to grow is **EVIDENT** in their **observable** behavior. And their willingness to **sacrifice** for the Lord’s Kingdom is also **EVIDENT**, as they bring their “costliest treasures” (TLH 127, 3) and lay them down gladly at the feet of their heavenly King. Yea, what a powerful **motivator** is the manifestation of God’s grace in Christ Jesus also to “*show forth the praises of the Lord,*” not only in private, but in the services of His House where our gratitude for His grace is then **EVIDENT** to the glory of His Name! May He grant to all of **US**, for Jesus’ our Savior’s sake, such glorious and evident **FRUIT** of His abundant grace, as He continues to manifest Himself to us in His spiritual **Epiphany** into our hearts by means of His precious Word and Sacrament, regularly and consistently dispensed to us in our local congregations (Isaiah 55:10-11), unto life everlasting!

—D. T. M.





## The Fruit of Christ's Epiphany in Our Lives

*“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ; who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” —Titus 2:11–14*

During the season of Epiphany, we traditionally give special consideration to the various “epiphanies”—*manifestations* or *appearances*—of Christ as our God and Savior according to the teachings of Holy Writ. In his letter to a pastor named Titus, the Apostle Paul in the above-quoted text actually mentions *two different appearances* related to Christ: (1) The appearance of God’s saving grace in the coming and redemptive work of Jesus Christ; and (2) the appearance of the Lord Jesus in glory and power on the Last Day. In connection with both of these appearances (or, epiphanies), we are exhorted to “*deny ungodliness and worldly lusts,*” and to “*live soberly [sober-mindedly], righteously, and godly, in this present world.*” But what exactly do these two epiphanies have to do with our Christian lives of sanctification in obedience to God’s Commandments?

Concerning the first of these epiphanies, we are told that the appearing of God’s grace teaches us to lead a godly life. But is it not the function of the *Law*, rather than the *Gospel*, to teach us how to be godly in our lives? It is true that the Law of the Lord does, indeed, set forth the divine requirements for holiness of living; but the Law does *not* either show us *how* sinful mankind can possibly be declared righteous in view of its requirements of sinless perfection (Galatians 3:10–11), nor does the Law provide man with either the ability or the God-pleasing desire (Romans 7:8–11) to “*live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.*” But all of this *is* taught in the *Gospel*, which sets forth “*the grace of God that bringeth salvation.*” The focal point of the Gospel is the saving work of Jesus Christ; and it is Christ’s work of redemption that truly reveals God’s grace—His undeserved love

for poor, unworthy sinners. *“In this was manifested [revealed] the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him”* (I John 4:9).

Now the great love that God has revealed to us in the Gospel of Christ, teaches and moves us to love Him in return; and it also teaches us to love our fellow human beings. In other words, it teaches, moves, and impels us to follow the Commandments of the Lord willingly and cheerfully. In the first epistle of John, we are told: *“Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another”* (4:11); and: *“We love Him because He first loved us”*(4:19); and: *“This is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments; and His Commandments are not grievous”* (5:3). This, then, is how *“the grace of God that bringeth salvation...[teaches]...us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”*

So the proper response to the epiphany of Christ, in which we are shown the saving grace of God, is to *“deny,”* or disown, abandon, and forsake all *“ungodliness and worldly lusts.”* We Christians should want nothing to do with the sins that we willfully and perpetually engaged in prior to our conversion. For God has changed our minds and hearts through the Gospel; He has shown us His grace in Christ Jesus and made us His loving and obedient followers through faith in that saving grace. Of course, we realize that the devil, the world, and our flesh still sorely tempt us Christians and frequently lead us into the pathways of sin and error. *But we are not to revel in these sins!* We are not to excuse them, defend them, and continue in them; nor are we willfully to put ourselves in situations in which we would easily fall into sin (Romans 13:14). Rather, *“denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”* God wants us to be *sober-minded*, that is, serious, concerning the things pertaining to our Christian conduct—not regarding sin as a minor matter or as something in which we might casually indulge for the fleshly enjoyment of the temporal pleasures that it offers.

As was mentioned earlier, the perfect standard for righteousness and godliness is the Law of God (in which we are clearly taught what we should and should not do). But it is the *Gospel* that enables us and motivates us to live righteous and godly lives out of love for the Savior. Any professed love for God and faith in Christ that is not accompanied by the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–24), good works, is nothing but a hypocritical lie (James 2:18–20; I John 1:6; 2:4; 5:3). If we are true

Christians, we cannot abuse God's grace by *willfully* continuing in sin—as if His grace means nothing to us. “*Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*” (Romans 6:1–2).

Jesus did not earn the forgiveness of sins for us through the shedding of His holy precious blood on the cross so that we would continue living in sin, or so that we would feel more comfortable yielding to the temptations of the devil, and be able more freely to pursue the wanton satisfaction of our own fleshly desires. On the contrary, “*He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them and rose again*” (II Corinthians 5:15). It is the *devil* who tries to use God's gracious forgiveness as a means of lulling us into carnal security—silencing the threats of the Law (which work to curb the outbursts of the flesh) and destroying the true appreciation of Christ's work of redemption (which compels us earnestly to fight against sin out of love for the Savior). In the portion of Scripture selected for this meditation, we are taught that Jesus gave Himself into death in order to redeem us from our sinfulness, so that we would serve Him with lives of good works. “[*Christ*] *gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar [special, selected to be His own] people, zealous of good works*” (v. 14). Note that God wants us as His people to be “*zealous of good works*”—full of zeal, energy, and enthusiasm for following His Commandments. He does not ever want us to become lukewarm in our Christianity (Revelation 3:15–16); nor will *we* want this to happen if the epiphany of God's grace in Christ Jesus has warmed our hearts (I John 2:1–3).

But what bearing does the *second epiphany* mentioned in our meditation text (the appearance of Christ on the Last Day) have on our performance of good works during this earthly life? There is really a *Law* application (as a curb for the flesh, to discourage sin with the threat of impending divine punishment) as well as a *Gospel* application (as the real power and motivation of truly good works). Both of these applications are illustrated by Jesus in His *Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins* (Matthew 25:1–12), in which He sets forth both the condemnation that will befall the unbelievers and the salvation that will be given to the believers at His great epiphany. After concluding this parable, Jesus told His disciples: “*Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of Man cometh*” (v. 13). Keeping in mind the fact that we do not know the time of Christ's epiphany as the Judge of all flesh, we cannot possibly think it safe to follow the foolish coun-

sel of the world which says: “Enjoy the pleasures of sin while you are young; you will have plenty of time to get right with God when you are older.” If we are living in impenitent sin, we are certainly not Christians, but are despising the Gospel of Christ; and, if we appear before the judgment throne of God in that condition, we will fall under His consuming wrath (Galatians 5:19–21; II Thessalonians 1:7–9).

The only way that we are ready for the epiphany of the Lord Jesus on the Last Day is by true faith in Him; for in Him we have been declared righteous by God (Romans 5:1). And remember that this saving faith is completely incompatible with a life of willful sin (Romans 6:1–2; Hebrews 10:26ff.). If our faith is living, then it must produce good works as its fruit. “*For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also*” (James 2:26).

Remembering especially that, at the appearance of the Lord Jesus in glory, we will in both body and soul enter into the full enjoyment of the salvation earned for us by His perfect life, suffering, and death, we should, from hearts overflowing with gratitude and thankfulness, seek to please Him with every thought, word, and action. It is always the *Gospel* of God’s undeserved love for us that is the real motive behind our good works. We Christians have been so greatly blessed to learn of God’s grace in Christ Jesus in the Gospel, and by the working of His Holy Spirit through the Gospel to trust in Him alone for the certain hope of eternal salvation in heaven. So now we who have been brightened by the rays of God’s grace are to reflect this light in our lives (Matthew 5:16). On account of our sinful flesh, we Christians still, sadly, transgress the Commandments of the Lord countless times each day. But, thankfully, through faith in Christ Jesus, all of our sins have been taken away; and for His sake our works of love are acceptable before God (I Peter 2:5) and are counted as good works (Ephesians 2:10). Accordingly, when we are brought before the judgment throne of Christ in His glorious second epiphany, we will be declared righteous and taken to heaven (Romans 8:1; Matthew 25:34).

May God the Holy Ghost, who has revealed to “*all men*” His saving grace in the Gospel of Christ Jesus, the Redeemer, and who earnestly desires that all men be saved by faith in His merits alone for salvation (I Timothy 2:4), may He, who has worked this confidence *in us* by the means of His precious Gospel, continue to *preserve us* in this true and saving faith by the same means (I Peter 1:5), as He has promised, until the day of Christ’s return (Philippians 1:6)!

—P. E. B.

## **Parental Oversight and Internet Safety in the Age of *Instant Messaging and MySpace***

*“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.” —Ephesians 4:29*

Christian parents know very well that God holds them responsible to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4). Today that duty extends to “cyberspace,” as parents need to be pro-active in overseeing what their children are exposed to and what they do online. This is a daunting task. Children are often much more computer-savvy than their parents. But this should not deter parents from knowing what their children are doing with modern communication technology. Parents have a right to know what is going on, as well as a duty toward their children to protect them from moral danger. Moreover, children should obey their parents cheerfully and gladly submit to their oversight for Jesus’ sake (Ephesians 6:1-3, Colossians 3:20).

A Christian parent may want to begin a discussion of the subject by asking the following pointed questions of their preteen or teenager:

- Have you ever used online technology to talk to someone you have never met in real life?
- Have you ever considered meeting someone you only know through email, IM or online chat?
- Have you ever used acronyms such as PIR (parent in room) or POS (parent over shoulder) to warn participants of parental oversight so they can hide or alter what they are saying to you?
- Have you ever erased private data, such as browsing and download history, because you didn’t want your parents to know what you have been doing online?
- Have you ever pretended to be someone else or someone younger or older online?
- Have you ever given out personal information or answered identity questions or sent a picture of yourself to someone online whom you never met face to face?

- Have you ever created a personal profile which others can see or link to from your screen name or opened a private email account with a password which your parents don't know about?
- Have you ever talked about things online you would not discuss face to face because they are too intimate or personal?
- Have you ever considered someone a friend or confidant solely on the basis of online communication?
- Have you ever felt guilty or ashamed after doing or saying something online and wished you had not done it?
- Have you ever used the computer or cell phone "secretly" or contrary to parental rules?

A "yes" answer to any of these questions raises legitimate parental concerns about risk taking and temptation in cyberspace!

Before considering the specific dangers of the use and misuse of online communications technology, we need to review the two main venues: **Instant Messaging** (commonly referred to as "IM") and **Social Networking Sites** (*MySpace*, *Facebook*, and others).

**Instant messaging** is "real-time" email which allows participants to engage in typed running conversations in cyberspace from computers, cell phones and PDA's. Some surveys claim that 93% of Americans between the ages of 12 and 17 use internet instant messaging services (*MSN*, *AOL*, *Yahoo!*, *iChat*, *ICQ*, *Skype*, *Google Talk*, and others). "Texting" (typing brief messages back and forth using abbreviations and short-cut words) over cell phones often begins in the 6th grade, and some surveys state that by the 12th grade nearly 95% use "texting" as the preferred way to communicate with family and friends. Teens create screen names and buddy lists and use these shortcuts to share information rapidly with one another. IM is also used in online public and private "chat rooms" as well as Social Networking Sites.

**Social networking sites** are very popular. Some surveys claim that as many as 70% of teenagers in the U.S. have online profiles posted on sites such as *MySpace*, *Facebook*, *Xanga*, *friendster.com*, or *Yahoo! 360*. These sites also allow personal website logs ("blogs"), picture, video and music posting, personal favorites and interests lists, friends lists, and instant messaging. Some users post every day (like an online diary). Formats vary but allow for personalized custom features. Rules

are posted, but they are often violated as the sheer size of these sites makes careful monitoring highly problematic and practically impossible. Age verification, for example, is an issue since age limits are based on the “honor system.” Site administrators simply take the users’ word that they are as old as they say. These sites also allow “privacy settings” so that a user can prevent some information from being available to the general public but only to certain other users.

Social networking sites are in some ways the “cyber” equivalent of “hanging out” in the modern age. But unlike the “malt shop,” the pool hall, and even video arcades, the “cyber world” is not local; it is not a place that parents can necessarily check out to see what is going on or who is “hanging out” with their kids. And that is a frustrating problem. Moreover, the fact that people online may not be who they say they are is also a dangerous twist.

Add to this the fact that online communications experts have recognized a strange and dangerous phenomenon that commonly occurs in connection with the use of “IM” and other online “cyber talk” such as “blogging,” namely, the “**online *dis-inhibition* effect.**” This means that people do things online that they would not normally do in the real world, face to face. In other words, these technological tools seem to break down important mental barriers or inhibitions, so that people “let down their guard,” as it were, and feel free to engage in behavior that they would not engage in without the perceived privacy (or secrecy) of cyberspace, such as self-disclosure of personal feelings and intimate details of their personal life. Offensive behavior such as gossiping, lying, the use of profanity, and engaging in sex talk also occurs. When teenagers were asked by one author why they felt they could do such things online when they would not normally do them elsewhere, three main “reasons” were given: “No adult supervision ...it isn’t real ...you don’t have to see the hurt in their eyes (the real life consequences of hurtful behavior are virtually removed from online interactions)” (Peggy Kendall, *Connected: Christian Parenting in an Age of IM and MySpace* (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press), pp. 72-73). Obviously, this “double mindedness” (James 1:8) is a recipe for risk-taking and a fleshly justification for indulging in sinful behavior.

Parents should be aware that some teens go to great lengths to keep them in the dark about what they really do online. They may create dual profiles: One for their parents, another for their friends. They may create private email accounts not accessible to their parents. They may

erase texting logs and other evidence of their activities. They may use computers and cell phones late at night to avoid detection and supervision. They may use code words to communicate information and alert friends about parental supervision (P911= parent alert!). Some teens develop clandestine romantic relationships, share intimate details of their life with *strangers*, view and download immoral and harmful content, reveal identity markers to potential predators, and engage in other activities detrimental to their spiritual well-being — without their parents being aware of *any of it!*

Sometimes these things begin because of a lack of real communication in the family and out of real emotional needs and personal confusion. A lonely teen is often a vulnerable soul. But looking to worldly peers and even to complete strangers to fill the void and answer emotional questions is obviously not the answer (Cf. Psalm 1:1-2). Often parents do not even realize there is “a problem” until they “accidentally” discover some cyber-evidence on a computer or cell phone. It is often difficult for parents and their adolescent children to maintain a level of mutual trust and yet to be responsible and accountable at the same time. Parents and teens need to discuss the subject and ever keep in mind that everyone must ultimately answer to God for his behavior.

It is important to consider the dangers present in the “cyber world.” In the Lord’s Prayer we pray, “*Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil*” (6th and 7th Petitions). We ask our Heavenly Father to guard and keep us from falling “into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice” because of the deceptions and seductions of Satan, the world and our own sinful flesh, and to deliver us from all evil by a blessed end, that we may die in true faith and go to heaven for Jesus’ sake.

What temptations present themselves in the “cyber world” of today? Obviously, every temptation in the real world has some virtual equivalent online. In particular, the 4th, 6th and 8th Commandments are often violated by online behavior. Consider violations of the 4th Commandment: God’s Word says in Colossians 3:20, “*Children, obey your parents in all things; for this is well pleasing unto the Lord.*” Any time children go contrary to what their parents say and do something online that their parents would not approve of, they violate this express commandment. This includes allowing peer pressure to influence them and seeking to please their “friends” by doing what they know their parents would forbid. Scripture enjoins children “*to show piety at home and to requite (i.e. repay) their parents*” by godly honor and cheerful obedi-



ence (I Timothy 5:4). We speak very earnestly and directly to each and every one of our young Christian readers: Does *your* online behavior show such godliness and respect? Do *you* show yourself worthy of the trust that your parents show toward you in allowing you to go online? How do *you* repay that trust? Are *you* doing anything that would bring shame on you or on your parents, or would provoke them to just anger, if they were aware of it? Do *you* fear “full disclosure” of your online communications and activities because you know your parents would not approve of some of it? And do *you* speak disrespectfully and resentfully of your parents online, thus showing your disdain for their dignity and authority and your despisal of God’s holy 4th Commandment? If so, you need to *repent* of those sins and *amend your behavior* by the grace of Christ’s blood-bought forgiveness in the Gospel!

Consider the 6th Commandment regarding chasteness and avoiding sexual sin. It covers evil thoughts and desires (Matthew 15:19, 5:28) as well as words and deeds. Scripture states, Ephesians 5:3-4 and 12, “*But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks... For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.*” Again we ask our dear young people directly to examine themselves in this regard: Have *you* abstained from fleshly lusts which war against your soul (I Peter 2:11) while online? Have *you* always replied to sexual temptation as Joseph did: “*How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*” (Genesis 39:9)? Have *you* taken to heart the Apostle Paul’s injunction to purity: “*Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are **true**, whatsoever things are **honest**, whatsoever things are **just**, whatsoever things are **pure**, whatsoever things are **lovely**, whatsoever things are of **good report**; if there be any **virtue**, and if there be any **praise**, think on **THESE things**” (Philippians 4:8)? We are to flee and avoid every **opportunity** for sexual impurity and never *consent* to sinful enticements by others (II Timothy 2:22; I Corinthians 6:18; Proverbs 1:10). What witness have *you* given to others in *your* online behavior about *your* heartfelt desire to keep the 6th Commandment in thoughts, desires, words and deeds? Christian parents are often shocked by the *screen names* their children choose for themselves online, by *suggestive pictures* they post or by *profane and obscene conversations* they engage in! —How about *your* choices? What message do these choices send to others? Do they reflect what Scripture enjoins: “*Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers*” (Ephesians 4:29)?*

Regarding other forms of corrupt communication, we must also consider violations of the 8th Commandment. Online communication (including blogs, IM and texting) are easily misused for libel and slander, for outright lying, for gossip and the revealing of our neighbor's secrets. The general rule of Scripture is so clear: "*Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law; but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge*" (James 4:11). Again, speaking directly to our young people: Have you "vented" or "ranted" against your parents online? Do you talk online in a way you would be embarrassed to do face to face? What is that all about? Does the context of what you say about others follow the royal law of love, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself*" (Leviticus 19:18; Matthew 23:39; Romans 13:9)? Our Lord Jesus says: "*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets*" (Matthew 7:12). Do you make use of the opportunity to "*do good unto all men,*" as Scripture enjoins (Galatians 6:10), when you communicate with others online?

Violations of the 4th, 6th, and 8th Commandments are not lessened because they occur in "cyberspace." In many respects they have a *greater* impact because they are often witnessed by *more* people; and they thus *give offense*, not only to Christian brethren who see them, but even to the world whose evil ways we are to despise and avoid, not to participate in! Every sin must humbly be repented of (Luke 13:3), laid confidently upon the Lord Jesus, who bore them all in our place (Isaiah 53:4-5; I Peter 2:24a), and then no longer *continued in* (Romans 6:1) as if God's grace meant nothing to us! Penitent sinners who cling for pardon to Jesus' blood and righteousness are promised forgiveness from God: "*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin*" (I John 1:9, 7c).

Finally, dear young brethren, consider *your* witness to the world as you use online technology to communicate with others. Your Savior tells you: "*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven*" (Matthew 5:16). A true believer boldly confesses with the Psalmist: "*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what He hath done for my soul*" (Psalms 66:16). When you are online, do you hold "*forth the Word of life*" as "*the blameless and harmless [son or child] of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among*

whom [you] shine as [a light] in the world” (Philippians 2:15-16a)? Are you “ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear, having a good conscience” (I Peter 3:15-16a)? Do you speak out what you believe in your heart? (II Corinthians 4:13). St. Paul tells you, as he told young Timothy: “Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God” (II Timothy 1:8). Does your online communication echo what the Apostle confesses: “I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Romans 1:16)? The Gospel is the power and motive for godliness. Only those who have God-wrought faith in the blood of Christ for the redemption of their soul and the righteousness of Christ for their justification before God Almighty have the power and motive to please God in Godly obedience. Out of love and gratitude for the gracious salvation God freely bestows in Christ, believers want to obey God’s will: “Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him” (Colossians 3:17).

This article has been written as a forewarning and an encouragement to parents and children to work together under God’s grace, guided by His Word, to the glory of God, as they face the challenges and temptations of the modern world and the dangerous lure of “cyberspace,” and to be wary of the cunning spiritual traps set for God’s children by the wicked. The Apostle Peter urgently exhorts all of us: “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.” (II Peter 3:17-18).

—E. J. W.

*Oh, let me never speak  
What bounds of truth exceedeth.  
Grant that no idle word  
From out my mouth proceedeth.  
And then when in my place,  
I must and ought to speak,  
My words grant power and grace,  
Lest I offend the weak.*

(TLH 395, 3)

## *Seminary update...*



By God's never failing grace, we just completed the first semester of the current academic year — a bit later than we had anticipated according to our tentative calendar because of a variety of special circumstances which the Lord in love had permitted us to bear (and to share) as His dear children for our ultimate good and blessing (Hebrews 12:6ff.). Nevertheless, we chose to extend the term rather than to take the easier alternative of devising

shortcuts and making accommodations in course content. That would have been a sacrifice of *quality* that we are not willing to make.

This past semester, our matriculated student completed **Dogmatics I** (the nature and concept of Theology through *Favor Dei*—the grace of God in Christ) and all but the last three chapters of Machen's text in **New Testament Greek**. Those remaining chapters will be covered as the first order of business in the Spring semester. As usual, all to the glory of God and enabled by His grace, Seminarian Jason Mabe did outstanding work both in class assignments and on written tests; and very consistently, also in class discussions and in the practical application of the doctrine which he has learned, he continues to show himself "*a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth*" (II Timothy 2:15).

This coming semester, his class load will increase from two to three courses since the credit hours per course are fewer, and each course will meet for two rather than three instructional hours per week. In addition to finishing up his New Testament Greek, Mr. Mabe will be taking **Introduction to the Holy Scriptures** — History, Text and Canon (2 hours), **Hermeneutics** — The Principles of Bible Interpretation (2 hours), and **New Testament Isagogics** — the content and subject matter of the New Testament books (2 hours). He will also continue to pursue his *practicum* or on-going "internship" in the local congregation (2 credits per semester).

We again expect to be joined by Mr. Phillip Martin of Peace, Oak Forest, and Pastor Robert Lietz from Oak Park, Illinois, as "*auditors*." The addition of these cherished brethren to our assembled class gives

us the advantage of increased broad based discussions and, of course, mutual edification as we exhort one another with the Holy Scriptures. May the Lord of the Church continue to bless abundantly our humble efforts to His glory to train well-prepared candidates of the Ministry for the future; and may He bless in particular our matriculated student and his dear family, as they together share both the arduous work and the joyful satisfaction of laboring in the vineyard of their Savior!

—Prof. David T. Mensing

## Statement of Purpose of Our Seminary

Our Seminary was established in 1969 by the congregations which comprise the Concordia Lutheran Conference in order to provide Scripturally sound theological training for students desiring to enter the office of the ministry in our midst. Such training is one of the objects of the Conference as stated in our *Constitution*, Article III, Section 5. Its basis is recorded in St. Paul's second letter to Timothy, chapter two, verse two, where the Apostle enjoins the young pastor: *"And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."*

Our Seminary is orthodox in its doctrinal position while progressive in its methods and understanding of conditions both within and without the church-at-large. All course work is permeated by that fear of the Lord and obedience to His Word which is the beginning, yea, the head of all wisdom (Proverbs 9:10). We pray that more young men will be moved to prepare themselves for this most important work so that the generations to come may hear and learn God's pure and saving Word from the lips of diligent and faithful messengers, for Jesus' sake (Romans 10:15).

## *“The Lamb of God” Willingly Bore Our Guilt*

*“Father, if Thou be willing, **remove** this cup from Me;  
nevertheless, not **My** will but **Thine** be done.” —Luke 22:42*

On Ash Wednesday, February 6th, we began a period of six weeks on our Christian church calendar, the holy Lenten season, during which we give focused and in-depth attention to the suffering and death of Jesus, our Savior. And particularly in those congregations which hold special midweek Lenten services, our people are afforded a special, cherished opportunity, not only to hear once again with their **ears** the *Passion History* of our Lord and Savior, but to fix their **hearts** upon its message, to ponder it devoutly in their **minds**, and to learn to appreciate ever more fully just what Jesus’ great passion really means to them as individuals, deep down in the innermost recesses of their **souls**. Where special services are not customary, the same message and focus is delivered by Christian pastors in their regular Sunday sermons.

During this present Lenten season then, we again open our eyes and ears, our hearts and minds, to the eager consideration of all that the dear Savior went through in His great passion **for US**, as **our Substitute**, in His *vicarious atonement* for the sins of the world. And, as a prelude to that consideration and a look ahead to the study and appreciation of that precious theme in the coming weeks, permit me to set before you a special invitation to “*behold the Lamb of God*” (John 2:29) in the Garden of Gethsemane, as He begins His *Great Passion* and undertakes willingly to bear our guilt.

On Maundy Thursday evening, Jesus and His disciples had shortly before left the upper room where the dear Savior had instituted the Holy Supper of His body and blood, and they had just entered that garden “of the olive press” outside of Jerusalem at the foot of the Mount of Olives, where they often took refuge for some quiet time together (John 18:2). Here Jesus was to begin His **great suffering** [*passio magna*] for the sins of the world; and here we see the very **Son of God Himself**, true God from all eternity, who had been sent by His Father down to this world of sin to redeem lost and fallen mankind (John 3:16; Galatians 4:4-5), yes, here we see in Luke’s Gospel account of His prayer in the garden the Lord of heaven and earth, **on His knees** in the **depths of humiliation**, in prayer to His heavenly Father.

Considering first of all who this Savior **IS**, what is the **reason** for this striking pose? In order to accomplish His vital task, the task He was anointed to fulfill, Jesus was “conceived by the Holy Ghost” and was “born of the Virgin Mary.” He took upon Himself human flesh and blood, so that, from the time of His incarnation, He was (and still IS) **both God and man**, of divine and human natures, in one inseparable and indivisible person. And yet, just having a human body and soul was **not enough**; for Paul writes to the Philippians (2:8) that He also “***humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.***”

When our dear Lord Jesus “*humbled Himself*” to be our Savior, He did not always and fully use the divine attributes (the qualities and powers) which as true God He possessed in all their fullness, also according to His human nature (Colossians 2:9). In other words, Jesus **did NOTHING** to get Himself out of suffering and dying for the sins of the world, even though He could have! Instead, with the full knowledge of what lay ahead for Him, He humbly prayed: “*Father, if Thou be willing, **remove** this cup from Me; nevertheless, not **My** will but **Thine** be done.*” It wasn’t that Jesus’ will was different from that of His Father; for that would have indicated a contradiction in God. No, it was just that, in His *State of Humiliation*, Jesus dreaded in His true human body and soul the thought of suffering and dying, just like any man, just like US. And yet, He **conformed** His human will to that of His Father in *humble obedience* (Philippians 2:8) to the divine decree, God’s plan of salvation, the decree in which He Himself had, of course, participated in eternity; and He prayed “*Thy will be done,*” thus demonstrating His **humiliation**, first of all, and also leaving us His **perfect example** of how we should pray.

“*And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven strengthening Him.*” Immediately His heavenly Father **answered** His prayer—not by **relieving** Him of the suffering that He was even now enduring, but by **strengthening** Him to **bear it**, as bear it He must to atone for the sins of the world. But notice that Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of all lords, was not using His **own** almighty power for the battle ahead, but He humbly permitted one of His own creatures, a holy angel, created by Him in the beginning (Colossians 1:16) to strengthen Him. Thus “*we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death...*” (Hebrews 2:9)!

“*And being in an agony, He prayed **more earnestly.***” What a powerful example for us, that when “the going gets rough” in our lives, and we

haven't received the answer to our prayer that we think we should receive, we don't just **give up** on prayer to our heavenly Father, but pray even "**more earnestly**," as did our Lord Jesus, adding in all humility, in confidence of His best way, "*Not MY will but THINE be done.*"

But as we "*behold the Lamb of God,*" we want to examine not only the nature of Jesus' humiliation and why He was willing to suffer according to the will of His heavenly Father, but also the nature of the **agony itself**, which was becoming increasingly intense with every passing moment. "*His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground,*" Luke tells us. Talk about **intensity of suffering!** And this was only the beginning!! —What was making that agony so intense for Jesus? The real answer to that question lies in the **nature** of the agony: You see, Jesus was experiencing the **torture** of a **guilty conscience**, a sin-laden soul, laden not with His own sins, but with the sin, guilt, and shame of every person who ever lived in this world and who ever will yet live on the face of the earth! The Bible tells us that "[*God the Father*] *made Him who knew no sin,*" Jesus, His **HOLY**, only-begotten Son, "*to be SIN for US, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*" (II Corinthians 5:21).

**Our** conscience is **used to** dealing with guilt; for guilt is with us every day and compounds itself with every moment we live and breathe; "for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment" (Luther: 5th Petition). God's holy Law **accuses** us, His justice **convicts** us, and we stand **guilty** in His sight. Without forgiveness, we would all surely reap "*the wages of sin,*" **everlasting punishment, eternal death** in the damnation of hell! And so, in order to find relief from our guilty conscience, we have to lay all **our** sins in true repentance on **Jesus**, for whose sake God in heaven has already forgiven them! But **Jesus'** conscience, which had been completely clear and innocent, now suddenly found itself burdened with the sins of the **world!** Now, for the first time, Jesus was feeling the **anguish of sin's guilt**, multiplied by all the souls, all the consciences, of sinful men — multiplied by **YOUR sins** and **MINE!**

"Surely **He** hath borne **OUR** griefs and carried **OUR** sorrows," Isaiah prophesies of Jesus, the "*Lamb of God,*" in his 53rd chapter. "*All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way,*" the way of sin, depravity, and guilt before God; "*and the Lord hath laid on HIM the iniquity of US ALL!*" Is it any wonder, then, that the Savior broke out into a **sweat**, the sweat of a **guilty conscience**, —an **in-**



**tense** sweat of **agony** and **anguish** so **overwhelmingly great** that it was “as it were **great drops of blood** falling down to the ground”?

“Behold the Lamb of God,” the **sacrificial Lamb** upon whom the sins of the world were laid! See Him there in Gethsemane’s Garden, kneeling in humble prayer to His heavenly Father, begging relief from His suffering, drenched with bloody sweat, and heart pounding in bitter pangs of guilty anguish! And let us remember, dear fellow-sinners, **WHY He is there!** Remember for **WHOM He is there!** Remember **WHOSE GUILT He is bearing** and **WHOSE PANGS OF CONSCIENCE He is enduring!** And then let us come to Him **with contrite hearts**, freely confessing our many sins and our utter unworthiness of His mercy and grace; and fall down humbly and gratefully to **OUR knees of faith** beside Him there in the garden, and pray with the hymnwriter this holy Lenten season:

*Whence come these sorrows, whence this mortal anguish?  
It is MY SINS for which Thou, Lord, must languish!  
Yea, all the wrath, the woe Thou dost inherit, this I do merit!*

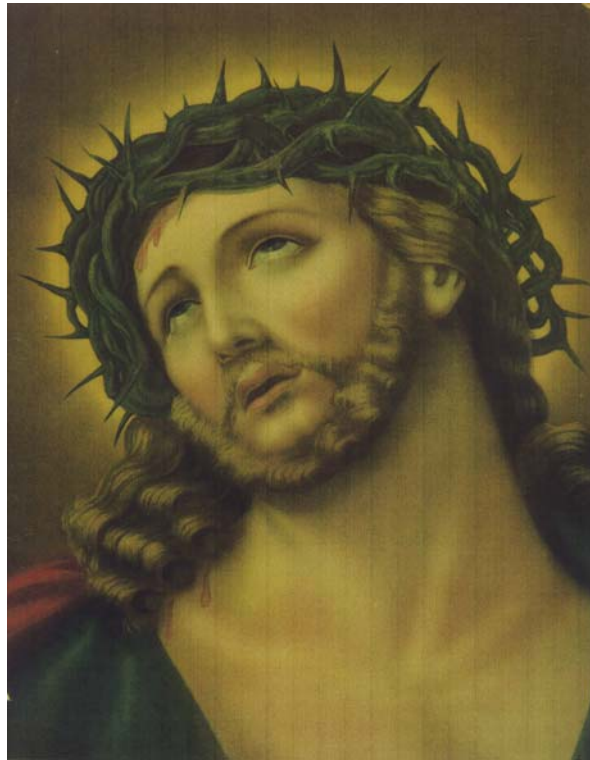
*There was no spot in me by sin untainted;  
Sick with sin’s poison, all my heart had fainted!  
My heavy guilt was laid on Thee, to languish for ME in anguish!*

*I’ll think upon Thy mercy without ceasing  
in penitence for sin which caused Thy woe increasing!  
I trust Thy merit! Humble thanks I render, Savior so tender!*

(TLH 143, 3, 6,12 adapted)

—D. T. M.





O Sacred Head, now wounded,  
with grief and shame weighed down;  
now scornfully surrounded  
with thorns Thine only crown!  
O Sacred Head, what glory,  
what bliss 'til now was Thine!  
Yet, though despised and gory,  
I joy to call Thee mine!

(TLH 172, 1)



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E-mail: pastormensing@yahoo.com

## **ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

Sixth and Tangent Streets  
Lebanon, OR 97355  
Sunday School & Bible Class ..... 10:00 a.m.  
Worship Service ..... 11:00 a.m.  
The Rev. M. L. NATTERER, Pastor  
483 Tangent Street  
Lebanon, OR 97355 (541) 258-2941  
E-mail: m.l.natterer@comcast.net

## **ST. LUKE'S LUTHERAN CHURCH**

5350 South Fountain Street  
Seattle, WA 98178 Telephone: (206) 723-1078  
Sunday School & Bible Class ..... 9:00 a.m.  
Worship Service ..... 10:30 a.m.  
The Rev. EDWARD J. WORLEY, Pastor  
9658 – 54th Avenue South  
Seattle, WA 98118 (206) 723-7418  
E-mail: revworley@comcast.net

**NOTE:** Services are also held in **Victoria, British Columbia** on the 1st and 3rd Sundays. Please call the Pastor for current location.

**Worship Service** ..... 7:00 p.m.

**Adult Bible Class** ..... 4:30 p.m.

**Adult Catechism Class** ..... 8:30 p.m.

### **ST. MARK'S EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH**

22012 S. Torrence Avenue

Sauk Village, IL 60411      *Telephone: (708) 758-6222*

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 8:45 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 10:00 a.m.

**The Rev. PAUL E. BLOEDEL, Pastor**

22012 S. Torrence Avenue

Sauk Village, IL 60411      (708) 757-6859

**E-mail:** revbloedel@yahoo.com

### **TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH**

300 North Ridgeland Avenue

Oak Park, IL 60302      *Telephone: (708) 386-6773*

**Sunday School & Bible Class** ..... 9:00 a.m.

**Worship Service** ..... 10:15 a.m.

**The Rev. ROBERT J. LIETZ, Pastor**

233 North Cuyler Avenue

Oak Park, IL 60302      (708) 386-4145

**E-mail:** robertjlietz@yahoo.com



“**S**urely He hath borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows; yet we did  
esteem Him stricken, smitten of God  
and afflicted. But He was wounded  
for our transgressions; He was  
bruised for our iniquities. The chas-  
tisement of our peace was upon Him;  
and with His stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray; we  
have turned everyone to his own way,  
and the Lord hath laid on Him the in-  
iquity of us all. He was oppressed,  
and He was afflicted; yet He opened  
not His mouth. He is brought as a  
lamb to the slaughter; and a sheep be-  
fore her shearers is dumb, so He  
openeth not His mouth. ...For the  
transgression of my people was He  
stricken.”

— Isaiah 53:4-8