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


“We have also a more sure Word of Prophecy.”

— 2 Peter 1:19
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:

To set forth in simple and plain language the pure doctrine of God's Word as taught by the true Lutheran Church in full accordance with the Book of Concord of 1580 and the Brief Statement of 1932.

To show, on the basis of Scripture, what true Christians are to believe and how, out of love for their Savior Jesus Christ, they are to lead Godly lives.

To furnish aids for Bible study and articles for Scriptural devotion and meditation.

To demonstrate, by our Scriptural stand, that our Concordia Lutheran Conference is not a sect or false church body, but that the congregations which form it confess, teach, and practice the Word of God in its full truth and purity and use the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. All who do this are the true visible Church on earth.

To seek out all who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, and to urge the mutual public acknowledgment of such God-given unity. Thus we shall be able thereafter to practice a God-pleasing fellowship with them.

To show that we do not have among us a mixture of divergent teachings but that we are "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

To set forth pertinent historical information which has a bearing upon the Church and to expose modern philosophical thought and the so-called scientific theories which contradict the Word of God.

To expose particularly the false teaching and practice of the various so-called "Lutheran" church bodies by comparing their teachings and practices with what is plainly recorded in the Word of God, in the Lutheran Confessions, and in the old orthodox Lutheran writings.

To expose false teaching and practice wherever it makes its appearance and to keep abreast of the current happenings in the church and among the nations as signs of the times.

To be truthful and factual in our reporting and freely to correct any misinformation of which we are not aware and which has been called to our attention. Also to clarify any information or statement of doctrine or practice which may be unclear to our readers or which may create a wrong impression.
Planning Ahead in the New Year

“For that ye ought to say: ‘If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that.’” — James 4:15

What are your plans, my plans, your resolutions, my resolutions for 2017? Did we remember and apply the counsel and instruction of James 4 to our plans and resolutions for this New Year? What is that perfect, always-timely counsel and instruction of God, “the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:21b), as He speaks to us through James in the 4th chapter of his Epistle? The Apostle writes: “Go to now, ye that say: Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain.’ Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” (vv. 13-14). What is the Holy Ghost teaching us in these words of truth?

- We should avoid planning as if today, tomorrow, next week, and the months of 2017 are most certainly, always going to exist for us to do what we want to do as far as traveling to and from our job, traveling to and from the grocery store and pharmacy, traveling to and from the habitation of God’s House where our local Christian congregation assembles regularly for worship (Hebrews 10:25; Psalm 122:1). Whether we travel by walking, by car, by bus, or by train, these activities are regular, common things that we do in our lives almost every day. And whether buying food, clothing, medications and whatever is needed for our bodies; selling or giving away what we ourselves no longer need; getting regular paychecks from our employment (Ephesians 4:28b) and, for some, getting monthly Social Security and/or pension checks; and coming to God’s House, where He is honored (Psalm 26:8) — these activities, these actions in our earthly lives, may well be, in themselves, “good” (Romans 12:9b) activities and not “evil” (v. 9a) activities. However, we have no guarantee that there will always, most certainly,
be a today, a tomorrow, a next week, a next month, or a next year to do, to carry out, to be able to participate in, these routine activities of our lives. James, in verse 13, addresses our short-sighted, fleshly tendency to assume that time either stands still or that it continues on without interruption as it has in the past, when he says: “Go to now, ye that say: ‘Today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year, and buy and sell and get gain [make money, make a profit].’”

- We human beings do not know what is going to take place tomorrow, next week, next month, or next year; we certainly do not know God’s plans for our tomorrows, our next weeks, our next months, our next years, except that whatever He ordains is always good (Deuteronomy 32:4; cf. TLH Hymn 521). Those who claim to know the unknown and unknowable by divining the future, who represent themselves as fortune-tellers [or future-tellers], God commands us to avoid; for they are deceivers who meddle into God’s business and take our times into their hands (cf. Psalm 31:15). They deceive themselves, and they deceive others; they are “an abomination unto the Lord” (Deuteronomy 18:12). God does not want us to use “divination” [fortune-telling], nor does He want us to use “an observer of times” [an astrologer, one who tells fortunes by observing the stars and planets, fortunes which are often set forth in horoscopes] (Deuteronomy 18:10b). It can only be said of the one, true God: “Lord, Thou knowest all things [which surely include the todays, the tomorrows, the next weeks, the next months, and the next years]” (John 21:17b). James reminds us: “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow” (4:14a). We do not even know whether there will be a “morrow.” We do not know, for example, when the Last Day of this world will take place (Matthew 25:36a); only our heavenly “Father” (v. 36b) knows when that day will come to pass. “The secret things belong unto the Lord our God” (Deuteronomy 29:29).

- Our earthly lives are not in our own hands, in our own control; but our earthly lives are most certainly and most surely in the hands, in the control, of the Triune God. Every child of God can join the Psalmist David in confessing: “I trusted in Thee, O Lord; I said: ‘Thou art my God; my times are in Thy HAND’” (Psalm 31:14-15a). Therefore, in this New Year, let us remember and apply to ourselves the changeless counsel and the sure promise revealed to us in Proverbs 3: “Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths” (vv. 5-6), in all of our todays, tomorrows, weeks, months, and years, including 2017.
Continuing in verse 14 of the 4th chapter of his Epistle, James now asks us a very timely question; and then he answers that question for us: “For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” Our earthly life is “temporal [temporary]” (II Corinthians 4:18b); it is compared to “a vapor,” to smoke, to fog, to “a shadow” (I Chronicles 29:15b), to something which does not last for a long time. Moses, in Psalm 90, compares us human beings to grass: “In the morning they [all people] are like grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and growth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth” (v. 5b-6). The Apostle Peter takes this example of the temporary nature of human life and contrasts it with the Word of God, which is eternal in its nature: “All flesh is as grass and all the glory of man as the flower of grass. The grass withereth and the flower thereof falleth away, but the Word of the Lord endureth forever; and this is the Word which by the Gospel [Gk. as Gospel, as good tidings] is preached unto you” (I Peter 1:24-25). Our human life, because of our inherited sinfulness (Psalm 51:5; John 3:6a), can end at any time, regardless of our age, in the death of our body; but our God, through the perfect, vicarious, substitutionary obedience and sacrifice of Christ in our place before God and in the place of the whole world, has won the everlasting victory over sin, death, and the grave; and God for Jesus’ sake has given us and the whole world forgiveness for all sins (II Corinthians 5:19) and righteousness in His sight (Romans 5:19b). The Apostle Paul rejoiced in this great work of God through Christ when he wrote in I Corinthians 15: “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the Law; but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ” (vv. 55-57). Now, it is most certainly true: “He that believeth on the Son [the Son of God, Christ Jesus, “the one Mediator between God and men” – I Timothy 2:5b] hath everlasting life, but he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him” (John 3:36). Yes, “the wages of sin is death [spiritual, temporal and everlasting death], but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 6:23).

As we “travel” into this New Year, 2017, let us now, in all of our planning and in all of our resolutions, remember the perfect counsel and instruction of the Apostle James in our title-text: “For that ye ought to say: ‘If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that.’” Instead of talking and acting as if we are in charge of our future earthly lives, we ought rather, instead, to say and confess: “If it be Thy will, O gracious God; if it please Thee; if it be permitted by Thee in the future, we shall do our planning in 2017 to bring “glory” (I Corinthians 10:31) and honor to Thee. By Thy “grace” (I Corinthians 15:10) and by Thy “mercies” (Romans 12:1), we shall “submit” (v. 7a) ourselves in fu-
future days, weeks, and months to Thy Word as our lamp and light (Psalm 119:105).”

What ought to motivate us in this New Year willingly to confess: “If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that” in our future time in this world, whether that time, according to God’s plan, is short or long? Our motivation should always be to show our gratitude for what our God in Christ has willingly and wonderfully done for us and for the whole “world” (John 3:16) of sinners. Oh, ponder and take to heart every priceless word of II Corinthians 5, verses 19 and 21: “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. ... For He hath made Him who knew no sin [the word order in the Greek] to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Let us not forget, in our 2017 plans, how our Savior, for us and for all sinners, “made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Philippians 2:7-8). Listen to your Savior in the Garden of Gethsemane: “O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt” (Matthew 26:39). Listen to the Savior, for the second time and the third time in the Garden of Gethsemane, submitting Himself to His heavenly Father’s will for the redemption and justification of the world of sinners with these words: “O My Father, if this cup may not pass from Me, except I drink it, Thy will be done” (vv. 42 and 44). Let us, hearing our dear Savior’s “voice” (John 10:27) in Gethsemane, willingly and grateful in 2017 declare to ourselves, to our fellow believers, and to those still in spiritual darkness: “The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge that, if One died for all, then were all dead; and that 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 5:14-15).

—R. J. L.
III. The Third Commandment

“Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.”

(In the Old Testament it was:

“Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.” — Exodus 20:8)

The word “Sabbath” in Hebrew means “rest.” The Lord initially instituted the Sabbath Day, the seventh day of the week, as a day of “rest” for His people (Exodus 16:23–30; 20:8-10; 31:13–16; Deuteronomy 5:12-14), as well as a day of commemoration in honor of God’s creation (Exodus 20:11; 31:17). He also ordained in the Old Testament various additional “Sabbaths” — Sabbath days, Sabbath feasts, Sabbath years, and even a Sabbath “jubilee” of seven-times-seven years (Leviticus 25). Only works of mercy (Matthew 12:11-12) and the labor of the priests in the Temple (v. 5) were exempt from the “no labor” requirement of the Sabbath. The Sabbath also became in the process of time a regular and consistent opportunity for His people to gather together in their synagogues for study and meditation in the Word of God and for instruction and worship (cf. for example Luke 4:14ff.). Concerning the function of commemoration, the Sabbath reminded
God’s people, looking back, of His “rest” after creating the world (Genesis 2:2-3); and Israel’s “day of rest” was in commemoration of God’s day of rest (Exodus 20:11). Looking ahead, it was a shadow-picture (Colossians 2:17) of the rest for our souls (and for their souls by faith in the prophecies) that God prepared in Christ —both now in His Kingdom of Grace and in heaven in His Kingdom of Glory in eternal rest (Matthew 11:28-30; Hebrews 4:1-11; Revelation 14:13). But those “days and months and times and years” (Galatians 4:10) which served as a preview or “a shadow of things to come” (Colossians 2:17) were abrogated or abolished by God Himself as being no longer necessary for His people since Christ, “the body,” the “real thing,” in whom we have true rest, had come in fulfillment of His prophecies.

Note that the Seventh Day Adventists, in blatant violation of Colossians 2:16-17, teach that the Sabbath and other ceremonial laws are still binding on Christians today; and they both require and observe them as good works pleasing to God [work-righteousness]. Moreover, the Reformed sects teach that God changed the Sabbath from Saturday to Sunday and thus require their people to observe Sunday as binding in the New Testament.

In his Small Catechism or Enchiridion, Luther asks: “What does this mean?” and then answers in accordance with Scripture: “We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.”

To understand fully the spiritual importance of the Third Commandment, we need to consider our spiritual need and how our gracious God fully provides for our need. Consider the following spiritual facts revealed to us in God’s Holy Word:

- Though all of us are sinners who deserve His punishment in hell (Romans 6:23), God in His mercy sent His only-begotten Son, Jesus Christ, into the world to suffer and die for the sins of us and all men (John 3:16; Romans 5:6-8).

- Though all of us were born spiritually blind, dead, and without true fear, love and trust in God (Psalm 51:5; John 3:6a; Ephesians 2:3b), God gave us forgiveness for all our sins, made us alive to Him, and made us His children by creating in our hearts faith in Jesus Christ and His atoning sacrifice on the cross. God the Holy Spirit gave us this faith and keeps us in this faith through the Gospel in God’s Word and in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Psalm 51:5; Ephesians 2:1-10; John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5; Romans 1:16-17, 10:17; Matthew 26:26-28).

- Since the Spirit of God works only through the Means of Grace (the
Gospel in the Word and Sacraments) to strengthen us in the true faith and to keep us in that faith, we will want to use those means regularly and consistently so that our faith grows and does not die (Colossians 3:16; I Peter 2:2; II Peter 3:17-18; Romans 6:3-4; Matthew 26:26-28).

- God establishes Christian congregations and also the Pastoral Office so that the Word of God continues to be taught and proclaimed and the Sacraments continue to be administered and used (Acts 2:41-47, 14:23, 20:28; Titus 1:5).

- God commands that Christians gather together for worship, to hear and learn the Word of God in its truth and purity, and to administer and receive the Sacraments (Hebrews 10:25, 2:12; Psalm 111:1; II Timothy 4:1-5; Matthew 28:19-20; Luke 22:19b; Acts 2:42; I Corinthians 11:23-26).

- God commands this all for our own spiritual good so that we may continue in the true faith and spend eternity with Christ Jesus in heaven. He also promises to bless the regular and consistent use of the Word and Sacraments (John 6:39-40; Isaiah 55:10-11).

The Third Commandment deals with God’s Word: “Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.” What does this mean? We answer with Luther: “We should fear and love God that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred and gladly hear and learn it.” How well have we kept the Third Commandment?

The Third Commandment proclaims that it is a grievous sin to despise preaching and the Word of God. How do we despise preaching and the Word of God? We do this when we do not attend public worship with regularity, that is, when we do not go to church when we have opportunity to do so.

Local Christian congregations, in the exercise of their liberty (Galatians 5:1 and 13), set aside particular times each week for public worship and to afford everyone opportunities to receive the blessings that God offers and bestows upon sinners in the Means of Grace, namely, forgiveness of sins, life and eternal salvation. The Lord exhorts and admonishes us to keep our spiritual priorities straight and to place them ahead of temporal things. The Savior tells us: “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these [temporal] things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). The account of the Savior’s visit to the home of Mary and Martha in Bethany clearly shows how we are not to allow temporal matters to distract us from the opportunity to hear God’s Word when it is taught: “Now it came to pass, as they went, that He entered into a certain village; and a certain woman named Martha received Him into her house. And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus’ feet and heard His word. But Martha was cumbered about much
serving and came to Him and said, ‘Lord, dost Thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her therefore that she help me.’ And Jesus answered and said unto her, ‘Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her’ (Luke 10:38-42).

Consider the principle of setting and following spiritual priorities on Sunday morning — the day and time commonly observed by Christian congregations as their primary opportunity for public worship. To allow temporal matters to distract you and to interfere with your regular and consistent attendance is wrong. One particular tendency in our modern age is the common practice of secular work on Sunday. To take a job, to change shifts, or to choose a profession which demands work on Sunday betrays a failure to recognize and set your spiritual priorities correctly. How can people say that they respect the Third Commandment and what the Lord says about putting matters of the soul first, but then make choices which cause them chronically to miss divine services? There was a time when very few jobs required work on Sunday inasmuch as society, in general, respected Sunday as a day free of encumbrances to participate in religious observances. That time is past. Sunday has become just another “day off” from work for rest and recreation. A Christian must not allow the demands of the world to interfere with God’s demands. When applying for a job, make it clear to the prospective employer that Sunday morning work is not an option for you. Do not choose a profession which demands that you absent yourself from the House of God on Sunday mornings. Stand up when an employer schedules you for Sunday work! Beware of any job which interferes with your ability to get up on Sunday morning to go to divine services! Trust that the Lord will keep His promise to provide for your temporal needs if you put your spiritual needs first and foremost (Matthew 6:33). Any temporary economic hardship that God may lay upon you should be viewed as a cross or chastisement which God shall enable you to bear: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able but will, with the temptation, also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it” (I Corinthians 10:13). God will bless your correct choices! God will provide for all your needs in Christ. Trust Him! Avoid putting yourself in any situation which makes going to church on a regular basis difficult because of your job or any other factor.

For example, a choice which may make attendance more difficult is where to live. If you choose to move away from the immediate area and thus make the trip to church longer, this may make travel problematic, especially in winter time. Attending to matters such as special ser-
vices, instruction classes, meetings and the like also becomes more difficult. Why would a person make his attendance more difficult? In all the years I have been a pastor, I have yet to see a choice to move farther away from church allow the person to maintain his former frequency of attendance—not a single case—despite promises made to do so! By the way, choosing to go away to a college or university where there is no orthodox congregation of our fellowship within driving distance every Sunday is contrary to the Third Commandment. Basically, any choice a person makes that makes attendance more difficult is wrong-headed and fails to consider what the Lord says about putting first things first!

Remember that we break this commandment not only by not going to church at all but by attending irregularly and even by missing church without a valid reason. We sometimes find that, when we miss church, it is simply because we have stayed up too late the night before or have “overdone it” by indulging our flesh to the point of exhaustion or sickness. Our sad state is therefore self-inflicted and betrays a lack of concern for the Word and worship of God. God says we are to be “not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner [i.e. habit] of some is, but exhorting on another” (Hebrews 10:25). We bring shame upon the name we bear when our “Christian” witness lies languishing in bed on Sunday morning. But missing church is not the only way we transgress this commandment in our lives.

When we attend church but do not listen attentively, we dishonor God’s holy Third Commandment. Again this may be due to intemperate behavior the night before, not getting adequate rest, or it may be due to the laziness of the flesh. Have you been a diligent and devout hearer of God’s Word, or are you present in the body but absent in spirit during the sermon? Do you actively desire to hear and retain what is taught? Do you sincerely open your Bible and studiously “search the Scriptures” as they are preached? Or are you easily distracted and bored, finding it hard to keep your eyes open during the sermon? How much do you remember just days, or even hours, afterward? Quiz yourself: What was the text? What was the theme? Oh, how forgetful we are of “the one thing needful!” Have you ever become resentful of the length of the sermon or of a worship service? This is one of the most vile forms of despising God’s Word. At times we find our flesh causing us actually to loathe the Word of God, even as it is being preached! This is how “far short” we fall from the glory of God in our keeping of the Third Commandment (Romans 3:23).

We also break this commandment by not believing and living according to the Word of God preached to us. Have you sought earnestly to hold fast to the Word and devoutly to practice that Word? Has the Word
preached made an effect on your heart and life? For example, do you diligently read the Bible in private and in family devotions? Do you cheerfully and regularly bring your offerings for the support of God’s kingdom as He has blessed you? Are you active in the congregation, seeking the unchurched, endeavoring to build up the kingdom of God in your midst? Do you minister to those whom God brings into contact with you, using the Law and Gospel properly and diligently? Do you use the written Word of God and the Sacraments as they should be used, or do you use them negligently or carelessly?

The Third Commandment commands us to hold preaching and the Word of God sacred and gladly to hear, learn and meditate upon it. The Scriptures state concerning the early Christians after Pentecost: “They continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in [Gk. the] breaking of bread, and in prayers” (Acts 2:42). Do you follow this example? God says: “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly” (Colossians 3:16). “This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night” (Joshua 1:8). “Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it” (Luke 11:28). “He that is of God heareth God’s words” (John 8:47). Christ warns us that when we refuse to hear His ministers we are despising both Him and His Father (Luke 10:16). We are to honor and support the preaching and teaching of the Word of God in every way we can (Hebrews 13:17; Galatians 6:6-7). How well have we done what God asks of us in the Third Commandment?

We have broken this commandment in thoughts, words and deeds, failing both to avoid unlawful actions and to perform according to this perfect standard. Our sins, both of commission and omission, condemn us as guilty before God. In order to be justified in the sight of God, we need both a righteous record of obedience to the Law before God and a ransom payment for our sins, our numerous transgressions against God’s Law. Since we cannot do this of or for ourselves (Romans 3:10, 12, 20, 23), we need a Substitute, a Savior, a Redeemer. Where shall we turn? To whom shall we flee for refuge?

We flee to Him who tenderly invites sinners to partake of true Sabbath Rest: “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest ... and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:28-29). The Rest-Giver is our Savior, Jesus Christ. He it is who fulfilled not only the Third Commandment but the entire Law of God for us: “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth” (Romans 10:4). He it is who unburdens our conscience paying the penalty of our guilt with His own holy and precious blood. He took our burden upon Himself, in guilt and shame, to appease God’s wrath upon us because of our sins, in our place. “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree” (I Peter 2:24a). In Christ Jesus we have the total
and complete forgiveness of all our sins by virtue of His ransom payment for us. By faith in His perfect satisfaction of divine justice in our place, “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1), “forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Peter 1:18-19).

The desire for the sweet, saving grace of Christ in the Gospel, the desire created in us by the Holy Ghost through that very Gospel, moves and motivates us to the regular and consistent use of God’s Word. Scripture exhorts us all: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby, if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (I Peter 2:2-3). As a newborn baby desires the pure milk of his mother to nourish him and cause him to grow physically, so we desire the pure Word of God, particularly the gracious Gospel of Christ, on a regular basis, to feed our souls for spiritual growth. We have “tasted” the sweet grace of Christ, the undeserved saving love of God, which brings us complete remission, full justification and righteousness before Him. This taste never fades for truly penitent sinners!

May God ever grant us this Gospel-created desire as we hold preaching and the Word of God sacred and gladly hear and learn it, for Jesus’ sake!

— E. J. W.
Why Was It Necessary for Our Savior to Become True Man?

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.” — John 1:14

During the holy Advent season, as well as in our celebration of the Nativity of our Lord at Christmas time, we recognize and profess the sacred truth that, for our redemption and salvation, the eternal Son of God, the “only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14b), “the Word,” as John calls Him by inspiration of the Holy Ghost, “became flesh and dwelt among us” (v. 14a). It is the holy incarnation of the Son of God that we celebrate on Christmas Day, the “mystery of Godliness,” St. Paul writes to Timothy, that “God was manifest in the flesh” (I Timothy 3:16), a “mystery” that is indeed “great” and yet “without controversy,” a fact not to be disputed, denied or even argued about. Sadly, however, all too many who celebrate Christmas as the “Holy Night” and the birth of the “babe of Bethlehem,” “Mary’s boy-child,” who is “the reason for the season” and, in a certain sense, “the Prince of Peace,” miss the entire “mystery” of His incarnation. They regard Christmas, as the modernists teach and represent it, merely as the commemoration of the birth of a baby who would grow up to be a great teacher, a spiritually-gifted healer, a social activist reaching out to the poor and disadvantaged, a preacher of love among
human beings struggling to achieve peace in their lives, a philosopher
whose ideas were too far ahead of His time, and “providentially” a mar-
tyr to His own cause when political opponents mistakenly resented His
influence among the people as an effort to create the impression that He
was the long-promised Messiah.

Thus we recognize the great tragedy, even among many nominal
“Christians” who are acquainted with the Scriptures, that many have bought
into the so-called “social gospel” of modernism and deny that “the Babe
wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger” (Luke 2:12) was truly the
Son of God, “God manifest in the flesh” (I Timothy 3:16), “very God
of very God …being of one substance with the Father” (Nicene Creed), and
regard Him merely as a fellow human being. But the question “Why did
our Savior have to be True GOD?” we shall save for a subsequent discus-
sion as we continue to explore the “mystery of Godliness” which manifests
our Lord Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world.

In this present discussion, we want to ask a question, arising out of the
obvious fact that Jesus of Nazareth was a true human being, namely,
“Why did He have to be true man in order to be our Savior?” The ques-
tion is asked certainly by those who find themselves in “controversy”
regarding “the mystery of Godliness” and muse over the holy incarna-
tion of God as being even possible in the first place, and then why God
could not have reconciled sinful man to Himself without Christ’s incar-
nation.

With regard to the first musing as to whether the incarnation of God
was even possible, we “set the record straight” with statements of
FACT from the Holy Scriptures, the verbally-inspired (II Timothy 3:16;
I Corinthians 2:13, etc.) “Word of God, which liveth and abideth forev-
er” (I Peter 1:23b). The long-promised Savior was prophesied from the
very beginning, throughout the Old Testament, to have human progeny,
that is, to be descended physically from human kind, of human ancestry
or lineage, of human parentage, to be a conceived and born son of a
human mother, and so on. God Himself said in the Garden of Eden
that He would be the woman’s Seed (Genesis 3:15). He would be
Abraham’s Seed (Genesis 22:18; cf. Galatians 3:16), Isaac’s Seed
(Genesis 21:12), Jacob’s Seed (28:14), of Judah’s line (49:10), of Jesse
the Bethlehemite (I Samuel 17:58), of David’s lineage (Jeremiah 23:5-6;
cf. Luke 1:27; 2:4-5). He would be conceived and born of a human
Luke 2:7, 11). And, “when the fulness of the time was come [when
God’s time was right to manifest Him as a true human being], God sent
forth His Son, made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4). The “mystery of
Godliness” became a fact of record.

The human nature of Jesus Christ, therefore, was and remains a creature. He was “made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4); “the Word was made flesh” (John 1:14); He was “the fruit of [Mary’s] womb” (Luke 1:42). He “was made in the likeness of men” and was “found in fashion as a man” (Philippians 2:7-8). Over the centuries, motivated and ruled by sinful human rationalism apart from and contrary to the clear statements of Scripture, false teachers perverted the doctrine of the true humanity of Christ, making His a phantom body (Docetism), or teaching that He had a body but not a soul (Arianism), or that He had a body and soul but no spirit (Apollinarianism), or a body and soul but no human will (Monotheletism), or a “heavenly, spiritual body which alone was worthy of Him” (the Gnostic, Valentinus).

Nevertheless, the human nature of Jesus Christ was NOT a human being and person of its own, as we are, and as the modernists teach Christ was, having only a divine connection, a divine likeness, a divine authority, and a divine personality, but not the divine person of the Son of God. For the pre-incarnate Son of God, the Bible says, “the [eternal] Word,” John writes, “was made flesh and dwelt among us” (1:14); and, “as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself [the eternal Son of God] likewise took part of the same” (Hebrews 2:14). The eternal Son of God took the created, genuine, and true human nature, subsisting from His human ancestry and “born of the Virgin Mary,” into Himself, united it with Himself, making it part of His own person, so that He was, from the moment of His conception in the Virgin Mary, both true God and true Man, “both natures together forming one undivided and indivisible person” (Exposition of the Small Catechism, 1943 edition, Question/Answer 128). The only
thing that differentiated Christ’s human nature from ours was His sinlessness. Having been “conceived by the Holy Ghost” (Apostles’ Creed) in the Virgin Mary (Cf. Matthew 1:18, 20b; Luke 1:35), Christ had no “original” or “inherited” sin (“Holy Thing,” Luke 1:35; also John 8:46); and during His earthly life committed no “actual” sin (I Peter 2:22; cf. Luke 23:41). Therefore the sin for which He was “smitten” and “slain” was not His own but the sin and guilt of men which were imputed to Him (Isaiah 53:4-6, 8b; I Peter 2:24; etc.).

According to His eternal, holy, perfect, impartial and uncompromising justice, God demands perfection of every human being (Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 20:7; Matthew 5:48; etc.), including perfect obedience to His holy Law (Luke 10:28; Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12), which He is perfectly entitled to demand of those whom He created in righteousness and true holiness after His own image (Genesis 1:26-27, 31; Ephesians 4:24; etc.). Thus God’s perfect justice demands perfect righteousness on the part of every soul of man for entrance into His heavenly kingdom.

Nevertheless, though man in his perfect concreated righteousness could have indeed resisted and survived Satan’s lying offensive in the Garden of Eden and could have thus overcome, defeated and conquered him, man willingly yielded to the temptation of the devil, disregarded God’s simple directive and command, and fell into the sin of disobedience, thus bringing upon himself and all men after him a sinful nature, the corruption of which and its total depravity made him spiritually blind, dead, and an enemy of God, and therefore unable to remediate and remedy his lost condition (Romans 3:12, 23; 5:19; 3:20; etc.). That total corruption or total depravity has been passed on through the entire human race by inheritance (as it were by corrupted spiritual DNA), so that all are conceived and born in sin (Psalm 51:5; John 3:6a). Our whole life and way of life (KJV: “conversation”) is “vain,” useless and empty, as it has been “received by tradition from [our] fathers,” handed down by inheritance from our ancestors (I Peter 1:18), totally without righteousness, so that even we Christians “were by nature the children of wrath, even as others” (Ephesians 2:3), having earned and therefore being deserving of God’s wrath and displeasure, death and damnation in hell (Romans 6:23).

In order to avert that dire consequence of sin upon all mankind, in order to reconcile the entire world of the ungodly unto Himself without partiality, in order to satisfy the demands of His divine justice without transgressing it by reducing its legislative requirements, and in order to demonstrate the extent of His divine mercy without requiring works as
a partial payment for the exercise of His favor, God “had to” (in our way of thinking) “devise” a plan that would accomplish **all those things** without compromising His justice or limiting His mercy.

Thus it was necessary that God’s eternally anointed Redeemer of mankind (1 Peter 1:20), His only-begotten Son (Galatians 4:4a) be “made **man**” (Nicene Creed), “made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4b); “made **under the Law**” (Galatians 4:4c), made subject to its demands as we are; to **take our place** under the Law to **redeem us** (the *Vicarious Atonement* – Galatians 4:5a), since we sinners are incapable of such a “precious” work, either for ourselves or for others (Psalm 49:7-8). To that end, “God so loved the world that He gave His only-begotten Son” (John 3:16), “so [that] by the obedience of One shall [the] many be **made righteous**” (Romans 5:19). “Then said I [declares His Son], ‘Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God.’” (Hebrews 10:7); and to the Jews Jesus said: “Think not that I am come to destroy the Law or the prophets. I am not come to destroy but to **fulfill**” (Matthew 5:17). Thus it was necessary that our Savior become **true man** under the Law as our **Substitute**, so that He as a **true man** would be **required** to render satisfaction to the requirements of the Law, and so that He, as a **true man**, would indeed **render** that satisfaction by His **active obedience**, devoting all the attributes of His human nature to the fulfillment of the Law in our place.

Moreover, according to His eternal, holy, perfect, impartial and uncompromising **justice**, “God threatens to **punish** all that transgress His commandments” (Luther). According to His justice, He **hates** “all workers of iniquity” (Psalm 5:5b), **prescribes** “**death**” as “the wages of **sin**” (Romans 6:23a) and **sentences** every sinner, saying: “The soul that sinneth, it shall **die**” (Ezekiel 18:4b); He **curses** “everyone that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them” (Galatians 3:10) and declares: “The way of the ungodly shall **perish**” (Psalm 1:6b). To put away His just anger and to lessen the punishment that His justice requires would be to destroy that **divine attribute** whereby He is completely fair and impartial, who “**rendereth recompense to His enemies**” (Isaiah 66:6). In order to justify themselves before men as “humanitarian” when they hand down sentences in the country’s courts, many judges in secular society “temper justice with mercy,” not imposing punishment “to the full extent of the law” but reducing sentences to a fraction of what is prescribed. Such judges are not truly just, or they would exact the maximum sentence allowed. But neither are they truly merciful, or they would set the convicted criminal free, granting him a complete and unconditional pardon regardless of how heinous the crime. However, **God’s perfect Justice**
demands full retribution and unremitting punishment for sin upon every soul of man and for any and every transgression of the Law in thoughts, desires, words and deeds (Ezekiel 18:4b), as well as for the guilt incurred because of Adam’s transgression, including man’s inability because of “original sin” to be perfect and holy (Romans 5:18, 19a) and therefore having “come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23), whether by a millimeter or a mega-mile.

Again, then, in order to avert that dire consequence of sin upon all mankind, in order to reconcile the entire world of the ungodly unto Himself without partiality, in order to satisfy the demands of His divine justice without transgressing it by reducing its punitive curse, and in order to demonstrate the extent of His divine mercy without simply setting aside “the due reward of our deeds” (Luke 23:41a), God “had to” (in our way of thinking) “work out” and decree a plan according to which He could visit the full fury of His wrath upon the sinner and the full punishment that His justice demands of the transgressor without either compromising His justice or limiting His mercy.

Thus it was necessary that God’s eternally anointed Redeemer of mankind (I Peter 1:20), His only-begotten Son (Galatians 4:4a) be “made man” (Nicene Creed), “made of a woman” (Galatians 4:4b); “made under the Law” (Galatians 4:4c), made subject to its punitive sentence as we are; to take our place under the Law to redeem us (the Vicarious Atonement – Galatians 4:5a).

Remember that the only thing that materially differentiated Christ’s human nature from ours was His sinlessness. Having been “conceived by the Holy Ghost” (Apostles’ Creed) in the Virgin Mary (Cf. Matthew 1:18, 20b; Luke 1:35), Christ had no “original” or “inherited” sin (“Holy Thing,” Luke 1:35; also John 8:46) passed down to Him by His progenitors since He was not begotten of men (cf. Seth, begotten of Adam “in his own likeness, after his image,” Genesis 5:3); and during His earthly life He committed no “actual” sin (I Peter 2:22; cf. Luke 23:41). Therefore the sin for which He was, in His truly human body, “wounded,” “bruised,” “smitten” and “slain” was not His own but the sin and guilt of men which were imputed to Him (Isaiah 53:4-6, 8b; I Peter 2:24; etc.). Likewise, the sin for which He suffered in His own truly human body and soul the tortures of the damned in hell (Matthew 27:46; cf. Romans 6:23) was “the sin of the world” (John 1:29) imputed to His person and accepted by Him to bear in our place (Isaiah 53:8b; I Peter 3:18).

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood,
He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage” (Hebrews 2:14-15). God, who is eternal, is not, according to that essential divine attribute, subject to death; but God Himself truly died in the person of the God-Man, Jesus Christ, in order to redeem us. In order to make satisfaction for our transgressions and to propitiate divine justice, “[God] hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us” (according to the Greek grammar of II Corinthians 5:21). He imputed the sins of the world to Christ, who was made in the likeness and fashion of a man (Philippians 2:7-8), and caused Him, according to His human nature as a true human being, to suffer and die vicariously in the stead and in the place of all mankind. That vicarious or substitutionary suffering and death would not have been possible had Christ not become incarnate for our redemption.

(In our next issue, we shall complete our exploration of the vicarious atonement of our Savior during the holy season of Lent with an article entitled: “Why was it necessary for our Savior to be True God?”)

— D. T. M.
Old Testament Prophecies Pointing to Christ’s Passion

“Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer.”

Luke 24:46

The great passion of Christ (His extreme suffering for our redemption) already stood as a written, divinely declared fact in the Old Testament Scriptures well before its actual occurrence in the course of time. Because of this, it “behooved” Christ to suffer, which simply means that it was fitting and even necessary that He endure such agony because Christ had been “delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God” (Acts 2:23) to suffer and die for the sins of the world. This crucial part of His redemptive work is what is known as His passive obedience — His intense suffering and death in which He endured on the cross the punishment that we deserve on account of our sins, even the pains of hell itself (Matthew 27:46). So that the people in the time period of the Old Testament could know about the salvation prepared by God through the suffering and death of the Messiah and thus be saved through faith in Him, many prophecies and symbols pointing forward to Christ’s passion, or suffering, were provided for their instruction, edification, and comfort.

The first prophecy pertaining to the suffering of Christ also happens to be the very first Gospel prophecy ever given. Following the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, the Lord foretold the defeat of Satan through a special “Seed” of the woman. Speaking to the devil, God said: “I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed. It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel” (Genesis 3:15). Notice that in the prophesied conflict between Christ and Satan, Christ (the Seed of the woman) would be victorious (the bruising of the head causing more critical damage than the bruising of the heal); however, it is clear from this prophecy that the Messiah would also have pain inflicted upon Him. But how much did Christ need to suffer in order to redeem us from our sins? A tremendous amount, indeed; even more than we are able to imagine. Because our sins were imputed to Him, and the punishment that our sins merited was also laid upon Him, Christ endured the “curse of the Law” (Galatians 3:13) for us, that is, the most dreadful pains of hell, the agony of the damned. Two chapters in the Old Testament are particularly noteworthy for containing a number of very detailed prophecies foretelling what the Messiah would suffer and why He would thus suffer, namely, Psalm 22 and Isaiah 53.

Though all the Psalms are entirely the inspired Word of God, some were written completely from the perspective of the individual psalmist (such as David in Psalm 51 or Asaph in Psalm 73), while others contain portions
written from the perspective of the Lord God Himself, such as Psalm 46:10 and Psalm 50:7–23. In Psalm 22 the pre-incarnate Christ speaks from His own perspective about the agony connected with His crucifixion approximately 1,000 years before it would take place. In the first verse of the Psalm, we read: “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?” Not only was this an exact quotation of what the Savior cried out from the cross (Matthew 27:46), but it also gives expression to the fact that Jesus was suffering the torments of hell, since only in hell is a person completely forsaken by God. While it could be argued that an imposter, a fake Christ, could have easily said those same words to make it appear as if he were fulfilling the prophecy, yet he would not be able to cause his enemies to say what was prophesied of them. And what the enemies of Christ would mockingly say to Him as He hung on the cross was also foretold in Psalm 22: “All they that see Me laugh Me to scorn. They shoot out the lip; they shake the head, saying, ‘He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him. Let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him’” (vv. 7–8 compare with Matthew 27:39–43). It is interesting to note that this Psalm foretells that the hands and feet of the Messiah would be pierced (v. 16), even though crucifixion was unknown at that time and would not be used until much later in the future. Two verses later, it is foretold how the soldiers would divide His clothes and cast lots for His tunic (v. 18; cf. John 19:23–24). Psalm 22 even records more details about what Jesus would feel and experience in His crucifixion than the four Gospels of the New Testament: “I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of My bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and My tongue cleaveth to My jaws; and Thou hast brought Me into the dust of death. … I may tell all My bones; they look and stare upon Me” (vv. 14–15, 17).

The reason why the Messiah would willingly allow Himself to suffer so much pain and the benefits of His passion for sinful mankind are clearly expressed in the book of the Prophet Isaiah, particularly in the fifty-third chapter: “The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all” (v. 6). “Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. … He was wounded for our transgressions; He was bruised for our iniquities. … He was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was He stricken” (vv. 4–5, 8). “The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed” (v. 5). “By His knowledge shall My righteous servant justify many” (v. 11).

In this chapter we also read concerning His quiet submission to all the abuse and injustice brought upon Him: “He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth. He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter; and, as a sheep before her shearsers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth” (v. 7; compare with Mark 14:60–61; Matthew 27:12–14; Luke 23:9).
“a sheep” brings out yet another image through which God pointed the people of the Old Testament to the coming Redeemer’s passion. The various animal sacrifices that were commanded by God to be carried out daily in the tabernacle and temple through the ministrations of the priests were continuous reminders of the fact that “without shedding of blood is no remission” (Hebrews 9:22). As part of His ceremonial law, the Lord told Moses: “Now this is that which thou shalt offer upon the altar: Two lambs of the first year day by day continually. The one lamb thou shalt offer in the morning, and the other lamb thou shalt offer at even” (Exodus 29:38–39). Foreshadowing how the sins of the people would be laid upon Christ, as upon a scapegoat, and how He would die to make atonement and secure their forgiveness, Moses wrote by inspiration of God: “If his sin which he hath sinned come to his knowledge, then he shall bring his offering, a kid of the goats, a female without blemish, for his sin which he hath sinned. And he shall lay his hand upon the head of the sin offering and slay the sin offering in the place of the burnt offering. And the priest shall take of the blood thereof with his finger and put it upon the horns of the altar of burnt offering and shall pour out all the blood thereof at the bottom of the altar. And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savor unto the Lord; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him” (Leviticus 4:28–31). While those animal sacrifices did not atone for sin in and of themselves, “for it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins” (Hebrews 10:4), they were still important pictures of the suffering and death of Christ to come (Hebrews 9–10), through faith in whom God’s people received forgiveness. Likewise, the Passover lamb also pointed forward to the passion of the Messiah, “our Passover,” and the grace of God through His redeeming blood (Compare Exodus 12:3–7, 21–23 with I Corinthians 5:7, I Peter 1:18–19, and Romans 5:9).

So when John the Baptist identified Jesus as “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), he clearly showed that he understood — as it was also important for his hearers to understand — that the foreordained work of the Messiah included suffering and death as the all-atoning sacrifice for the sins of the world. Sadly, most of the people at that time did not accept what the Old Testament taught about the passion of the Messiah, because so many of them had been misled into thinking that Christ would be an earthly king (John 6:14–15) who would never die (John 12:32–34). His sovereign dominance did not seem to fit with the idea that His enemies could possibly kill Him. Even the closest disciples of Jesus, when they saw His enemies capture Him, were “offended,” “forsook Him and fled” (Matthew 26:31, 56) — which was also foretold in the Old Testament (Zechariah 13:7). Of course, Christ’s passion should not have surprised the disciples, espe-
cially after He had specifically told them: “Behold, we go up to Jerusa-
lem; and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son
of Man shall be accomplished. For He shall be delivered unto the Gen-
tiles, and shall be mocked, and spitefully entreated, and spitted on; and
they shall scourge Him and put Him to death” (Luke 18:31–33). Notice
here that Jesus not only detailed what would happen in His great pas-
sion, but He also emphasized that His suffering and death would fulfill
those things which were written of Him by the prophets.

Another proof that Christ’s passion had been foretold in the Old Testa-
ment Scriptures — even though such prophecies were not generally rec-
ognized by the people — can be found in Luke 24:13–27. Foolishly,
the two disciples on their way to Emmaus expressed doubts about Je-
sus’ Messiahship specifically because of His passion (vv. 19–21). Un-
derstandably, Jesus responded: “O fools and slow of heart to believe all
that the prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these
things and to enter into His glory?” (vv. 25–26). Then the Lord, still
unrecognized by them as they walked together, proceeded to show them
the prophecies of which they had lost sight and which could restore
their confidence in Him: “And beginning at Moses and all the proph-
ets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concern-
ing Himself” (v. 27). Even though the Old Testament prophecies concern-
ing Jesus’ suffering and death were initially given for the instruction
and edification of those living long before His passion took place, those
prophecies were also vitally important after Christ’s passion (Romans
15:4) to help the people understand that Jesus suffering and death, and
the way Jesus suffered and died, should not cause them to doubt His
Messiahship. On the contrary, His passion was proof positive that He
is, indeed, the Messiah, whose coming and work were foretold by “all
the prophets” (Acts 10:43).

Yes, all that Jesus suffered at the hands of wicked men in order to re-
deem this sinful world had been accurately foretold by inspiration of the
Holy Ghost in the Old Testament Scriptures. This does not, however,
mean that those who sinfully betrayed Him, forsook Him, mocked Him,
falsely accused Him, unjustly condemned Him, and inflicted great pain
upon Him were serving the Lord by doing His will; nor does it mean
that God was in any way responsible for their evil deeds against the
Savior. God did not cause them to do what was prophesied about them;
but because God’s foreknowledge of all things is perfect, He was able
accurately to foretell what they would do to the Messiah. The Lord
simply allowed Satan and the sinful flesh of men in his service to do
those things that their contempt for Him would naturally move them to
do; and God, in His unfathomable wisdom, power, and grace, caused
those wicked actions to serve His good purpose for the redemption of
lost and condemned mankind. This is similar to how the Lord’s over-
ruling providence causes even the sinful deeds of our enemies, which
they design for our harm, to serve the spiritual and eternal welfare of
His believing children (Romans 8:28; Genesis 50:20). And that loving,
fatherly care, just like every act of kindness from God toward us miser-
able, wretched sinners, is bestowed upon us by His pure grace and mer-
cy on account of Christ Jesus’ work of redemption — His perfect life
and His bitter passion as our Substitute under divine justice.

Our hearts should be filled with joy and gratitude for how the Lord
guides and directs all things to serve His good and gracious will for us
Christians, as we ponder for our edification the Gospel prophecies of
the Old Testament together with the historical accounts of how those
prophecies were fulfilled in the fullness of time. And may we ever
grow in our appreciation of the fact that “thus it is [stands] written, and
...thus it behooved Christ to suffer” (Luke 24:46) for our forgiveness
and eternal salvation!

Lo, what the Word in times of old
of future days and deeds foretold
is all fulfilled while ages roll,
as traced on the prophetic scroll.

Abiding, steadfast, firm, and sure,
the teachings of the Word endure.
Blest he who trusts this steadfast Word;
his anchor holds in Christ, the Lord!

(TLH 290, vv. 3–4)

—P. E. B.
Churches in Fellowship

ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH OF EKATERINBURG
Ekaterinburg, Russia
The Rev. Roman G. Schurganoff, Pastor
P. O. Box 27
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CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH
Olu-Ama (Kula), Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)

ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Abule Egba, Lagos, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)

HOLY TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH
Idama, Nigeria
The Rev. Innocent Karibo, Pastor
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Idama, Rivers State, NIGERIA

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH
Abalama, Nigeria
The Rev. Balaiyi Thompson and The Rev. Bateinm Bestman, Pastors
Thompson Compound Abalama
Abalama, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. CLEMENT’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Elem-Sangama, Nigeria
The Rev. Timothy Biobele Aaron, Pastor
St. Clement Lutheran Church,
Elem-Sangama Arch-Deaconry
Elem-Sangama, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. MATTHEW’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Port Harcourt, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)
76 Abba Street, Mile 1 Diobu
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. PAUL’S LUTHERAN CHURCH
Kula, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)
St. Paul’s Lutheran Church
Kula, Rivers State, NIGERIA

ST. PAUL’S NYEMONI LUTHERAN CATHEDRAL
Abonnema, Nigeria
The Rev. Nimi B. Fyneface and
The Rev. God’stime E. D. Douglas, Co-Pastors
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E-Mail: njohnfyneface@yahoo.co.uk
GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH  
4090 S. Melpomene Way, Tucson, AZ  85730  
GoodShepherdLutheranChurchTucson.com
- Worship Service ..................................... 9:30 a.m.
- Sunday School & Bible Class ........ 10:45 a.m.
- The Rev. DANIEL P. MENSING, Pastor
- 8464 East Wildcat Drive, Tucson, AZ 85730
- Pastor: (520) 448-8694
- E-mail: goodshepherdlutherantucson@gmail.com

PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Central Avenue at 171st Place, Oak Forest, IL  60 291  
PeaceEvLutheran.com
- Worship Service ..................................... 10:00 a.m.
- Sunday School & Bible Class ............. 10:00 a.m.
- The Rev. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor
- 17151 South Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913
- Pastor: (708) 532-9035
- E-mail: pastormensing@yahoo.com

ST. JOHN’S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
Sixth and Tangent Streets, Lebanon, OR 97355
- Worship Service ..................................... 11:00 a.m.
- Sunday School & Bible Class ............. 10:00 a.m.
- The Rev. PAUL E. BLOEDEL, Pastor
- 483 Tangent Street, Lebanon, OR 97355
- Pastor: (541) 258-2941
- E-mail: revbloedel@gmail.com

ST. LUKE’S LUTHERAN CHURCH  
5350 South Fountain Street, Seattle, WA  98178  
StLukes-CLC.com
- Worship Service ..................................... 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday School & Bible Class ............. 9:00 a.m.
- The Rev. EDWARD J. WORLEY, Pastor
- 9658 – 54th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118
- Pastor: (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 EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411  
StMarksEvLutheran.com
- Worship Service ..................................... 3:30 p.m.
- Adult Bible Class ..................................... 4:45 p.m.
- The Rev. DAVID J. MENSING, Pastor
- 22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411
- Pastor: (708) 655-7549
- E-mail: d_mensing@hotmail.com

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300 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302  
TrinityEvLutheran.com
- Worship Service ..................................... 10:15 a.m.
- Sunday School & Bible Class ............. 9:00 a.m.
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