

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 Word
of the Lord
endureth forever.”

—1 Peter 1:25





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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.

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Sermon Preached at the Service of Convocation

by President Edward J. Worley — Seattle, Washington
June 28, 2019

Text: **Matthew 24:35**

Dear fellow-sinners, ransomed in the blood of Christ Jesus, the only Savior and Redeemer of the world:

Dr. Franz Pieper notes:

Men put little faith in what God says. They believe neither God's threats in the Law (Psalm 90:11) nor His promises in the Gospel (Isaiah 53:1; John 12:38). But this distrust and disbelief frustrates God's gracious purpose to save man. Therefore God does not hesitate to assure us in His Word that He is not a liar like men, but the absolute truth. Romans 3:4: "*Let God be true, but every man a liar.*" According to God's record, man's veracity score is zero. Not only does Scripture characterize some peoples and persons as past masters at lying, e.g., the Cretians (Titus 1:12), but Christ declares that the whole human race is inherently dishonest, deceitful, mendacious. Out of the heart, the inner being, proceed false witnesses and blasphemies (Matthew 15:19). And David states: "*All men are liars*" (Psalm 116:11). Over against this universal dishonesty of man, Scripture repeatedly places the absolute truthfulness of God into the sharpest possible antitheses (Titus 1:2; John 3:33; Hebrews 6:18; I Samuel 15:29; Numbers 23:19). —God's words can therefore never pass away (Matthew 24:35); John 10:35: "*The Scripture cannot be broken.*" The absolute truthfulness of God in His wrath as well as in His grace should, on the one hand, arouse men from their carnal security, for God will not be mocked (Galatians 6:7) and, on the other hand, incite them to trust God's gracious promises unconditionally (Romans 10:11; Titus 1:2: "*Eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised.*") (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. I, p. 458).

So the doctrine of the truthfulness of God offers great comfort to us. But what if all these promises were not preserved to us in our latter day, in 2019? If God did not providentially preserve His Word, Holy Scripture, we could not know, with any true certainty whatsoever, anything about our salvation! Therefore, it is vitally important that, as we proclaim on the basis of our text, "God's Word, the Holy Bible, is Here to Stay!" Consider two chief points: **I.** Though heaven and earth shall pass away, **II.** Christ's words shall not pass away.



Let us pray: Dear Lord Jesus, Thou art our faithful Lord and Savior, and Thou doest all things well, including preserving Thy Word, the Bible, the Holy Scripture. Grant us renewed certainty regarding Thy Word and especially Thy gracious Gospel promise as we, by the grace and power of Thy Spirit, receive Thy Word this morning. In Thy Name we pray, beloved Redeemer. Amen.

Our text is the word of our Lord, who declares to all: *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away”* (Matthew 24:35). *“Heaven and earth,”* that is, the universe created by God *“in the beginning”* (Genesis 1:1), will pass away or perish. The visible heavens and everything contained therein, as well as this entire world, this “terrestrial ball,” will pass away.

This may remind you of similar language regarding sinful mankind. James declares: *“As the flower of the grass he shall pass away”* (1:10; cf. I Peter 1:24). Why must every sinful human being die? The clear answer is found in God’s Word, which states: *“For the wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23a). Man is, by fallen nature, sinful and unclean and has transgressed God’s holy Law countless times in thoughts, desires, words and deeds. Therefore, the sinner is justly condemned by God’s Holy Law and deserving of the prescribed penalty: Eternal death: *“the soul that sinneth, it shall die”* (Ezekiel 18:4; cf. Romans 5:12).

Man dies as the result of sin – the heaven and the earth, the created universe, is also affected by man’s fall into sin. God cursed the creation for man’s sake when man fell into sin (Genesis 3:17), so that man’s sin is the cause of all the world’s various ecological problems and natural disasters. Man’s sin is also the reason why this creation, now cursed, must pass away.

God Himself, the Creator of the universe, shall destroy it: *“Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thine hands. They shall perish; but Thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up; and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail”* (Hebrews 1:10-12; cf. Psalm 102:26-28). How shall He destroy it? In II Peter 3:7-12 we have God’s classic explanation: *“But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same*

word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat. The earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and Godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?"

Dr. Franz Pieper explains:

Our old Lutheran theologians are not agreed whether this passing away is to be defined more specifically as a total annihilation or only as a transformation or conversion. All who assume a transformation of the creation must teach a change whereby the world in its entire present outward form really passes away on Judgment Day or comes to an end. I Cor. 7:31, "The fashion of this world passeth away." Luther: "In short, whatever belongs to the nature of these temporal goods, whatever constitutes this transitory life and activity, shall all cease." (*Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. III, pp. 542-543).

When shall this occur? Only God knows "*the day of God*" (II Peter 3:12); only the Lord knows "*the day of the Lord*" (II Peter 3:10), as our Lord Jesus Himself explains just after our text: "*But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but My Father only*" (v. 36).

What is God's purpose in destroying His present creation? God tells us this is a judgment upon sin, for "*the whole world lieth in wickedness*" (I John 5:19); and the physical world is cursed because of this world of sinful human beings. But God has another purpose in destroying this present evil world: To make room for the new! God says through the Apostle Peter: "*Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness*" (II Peter 3:13). The Holy Ghost explains through Paul: "*For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope, because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of*

the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body” (Romans 8:20-23; cf. Hebrews 12:26-28).

God will create (or re-create) a new dwellingplace for the saints, the believers resurrected unto glory! God reveals through the Apostle John: *“And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people; and God Himself shall be with them and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain; for the former things are passed away.’ And He that sat upon the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said unto me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said unto me, ‘It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son”* (Revelation 21:1-7; cf. Isaiah 65:17).

Yes, there is the place God has prepared for His sons and daughters, an eternal resting place of joy and peace; this is where eternal life is spent: with God, in glory. But how shall sinners, who not only have merited their own eternal death by sin but also have caused the destruction of God’s creation by sin, enter into this glorious place prepared for God’s “saints,” His “holy ones”? God’s Word, His Law, tells us emphatically that sinners cannot earn the status of saints nor change their sinful natures. No, eternal life is a gift earned and merited for all sinners by Another, a gift of grace given freely to sinners without any cost to them whatsoever. The good news is exactly that *“the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord”* (Romans 6:23).

What did Christ do to gain eternal life for sinners? He fulfilled the Law for righteousness: *“Therefore as by the offense of one [i.e. Adam] judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One [i.e. Christ] the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. ...That, as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through*

righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord” (Romans 5:18, 21). “For they, being ignorant of God’s righteousness and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Romans 10:3-4).

Moreover Christ took upon Himself all the sin, guilt and eternal, damning punishment of the entire fallen human race and paid for it all: *“For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him” (Romans 5:6-9). “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but quickened by the spirit” (I Peter 3:18). In Christ and in Him alone sinners are forgiven all their sins and are declared righteous in God’s sight – for the sake of His infinite merit and holy shed blood; “For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Romans 3:23-24). Righteousness and remission of sins have been acquired for all sinners!*

The Gospel proclaims this finished, objective justification and works the faith needed personally to receive the benefit. Believe it by the grace and power of God alone (faith is entirely God’s work and gracious gift, Ephesians 2:8-9), and you have it! Our Lord Himself promises: *“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (John 3:16). To all believers God says: “Belovéd, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is” (I John 3:2). To this the Holy Ghost, through the Apostle Paul, utters this amen: “For our conversation [literally, our citizenship] is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself” (Philippians 3:20-21). Therefore, in this life we live as strangers and pilgrims on the earth, persuaded of our heavenly goal and home by the sure and certain promises of our ever faithful God. We are persuaded because God’s Word is true, and that Word is here to stay! Our Savior Himself says in our text:*

“My words shall not pass away.” Our Lord uses the strongest negation possible in the Greek language to say, *“My Word shall **by no means** pass away.”* One commentator correctly says: *“So the physical heaven and the physical earth will change completely ...But the words of Jesus will never undergo even the slightest change, either in meaning or in form”* (R. C. H. Lenski, *Commentary on Matthew*, p. 954).

Why is this promise for the future, this prophecy, so important? This word of Jesus assures us that every generation will have Christ’s words. How did Christ go about fulfilling this promise? Did He write His words down in a book for the successive generations? No, but He commissioned apostles to record His Words. How could the apostles remember His words? Christ gave them the Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Holy Trinity: *“These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in My name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you”* (John 14:25-26). Did Jesus Christ expect His apostles to teach others *everything* that He taught the disciples? Yes, as a matter of fact, He *commanded* them to do so: *“Go ye therefore and teach [literally, make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen”* (Matthew 28:19-20).

The Bible teaches that the Holy Ghost gave the apostles God’s Word. The Holy Ghost, through the Apostle Paul, testifies to this fact with these clear words: *“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God; which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual”* (I Corinthians 2:12-13). The apostles were given God’s Word by God’s Spirit, even as were the Old Testament prophets. The Holy Ghost, through the Apostle Peter, testifies: *“Knowing this first that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved [literally, borne along] by the Holy Ghost”* (II Peter 1:20-21).

What they *spoke*, the words they uttered, they also *wrote down*. They spoke the Word of God by the power of the Holy Ghost, and they wrote down the same Word of God by that very same power: *“All Scripture is*

given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Timothy 3:16). The Bible itself teaches “that God the Holy Ghost moved the holy men to write, and put into their minds the very thoughts which they expressed and the very words which they wrote. (Verbal Inspiration).” “Whose word, then, is every word of the Bible? Every word of the Bible is God’s Word, and therefore the Bible is without error” (*A Short Explanation of Dr. Luther’s Small Catechism*, C. P. H., 1943, Q/A10 and 11, p. 41). Our Savior says: “*The Scripture cannot be broken*” (John 10:35).

Now, strictly speaking, only the original manuscripts were verbally inspired; nevertheless, a correct copy of the original text is as truly the Word of God as the original text itself. Today we have preserved unto us thousands of copies by which we have a correct copy of the original text — a true Bible, which is the Word of God. This true Bible was then faithfully translated into English, so that we have the Word of God in English, a faithful translation based on trustworthy, reliable copies of the original verbally inspired manuscripts — the *King James Version* of 1611, which God has blessed for over 400 years and counting!

But not all Lutherans believe this, as is clearly evident by the small size of our “*little flock*” (Luke 12:32). Why? They have fallen prey to the theories of modern Bible translators. Modern Bible scholars, by and large and almost without exception, deny that we presently have, or ever will have, correct copies of the Bible manuscripts and portions thereof among the 5,000 or so we have of the New Testament alone. They use this so-called “fact” as a reason for denying that the original writings were verbally inspired. Dr. Theodore Engelder says:

As a rule they put their...argument in this form: there are legions of variant readings; it follows that we have no fixed, no authentic, no reliable text; and from that it follows that Verbal Inspiration is a dead issue. Dr. A. E. Deitz put it this way [in *The Lutheran Church Quarterly*, 1935, p. 130]: “Manifestly, we cannot be guided by a book which is no longer available, however perfect and inerrant and infallible it may have been.” Another modern puts it still more bluntly: “We have been dwelling in the traditional text as in an ancient, comfortable house; the spirit of our fathers ruled there and made it comfortable and cozy. Now comes the building inspector, condemns the building, and demands that we move out.” The old house is “rotten, rickety, in a tumble-down condition” (See also Dr. F. Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, I, p. 414). [They also say that] we no longer have the original manuscripts; they may have been — or were — inerrant by virtue of Verbal Inspiration; but since we possess only copies, made by fallible men, it is a waste of time to discuss Verbal Inspiration; it has no practical value. (*Scripture Cannot Be Broken*, pp. 185, 189).

One of the members of the *Revised Standard Version* translating committee, Dr. Fredrick C. Grant, writes in *Translating the Bible* (p. 122):

The uncertainty of the text is just enough to do away with the old-fashioned idea of “verbal” inspiration and an infallible “letter” of Scripture. If, say, five or ten percent of the language of the Bible may be slightly different than its original, though not sufficient to bring any Christian doctrine into question, it is enough to destroy a bibliolatrous literalism. Uncertainty, even of a tenth of one percent, must mean the end of infallibility.

Now, why are these scholars so uncertain about the text? They have followed theories based on human reason and have decided that the vast majority of the extant texts of the New Testament are not reliable, and they have instead used a small group of other manuscripts to call into question the accepted readings of the majority. Since they do not believe in Verbal Inspiration, they deny Providential Preservation and seek to prove their unbelief with so-called “scientific methods.”

Why are certain translations filled with deletions, false translations, and inner-contradictions (cf. Genesis 22:18 with Galatians 3:8 in *RSV*, *NASB*, *TEV*, etc.)? The blame rests on a corrupted Greek text (which modern Bible scholars exalt as most reliable) and the doctrinal bias or unbelief of the translators. Thus these modern translations only *contain* the Word of God in the places where they translate it correctly *and* their text agrees with the true text; but these translations contain also the word of sinful man, including even commentary not found in *any* Greek text!

The *Authorized Version* (1611), the *King James Version*, which we pledge ourselves to use exclusively by mutual agreement, is a correct translation, being the true Word of God, reproducing God’s truth in a different language — English. For God, who gave us His Word, in lovingkindness carefully watched over its preservation through the vast majority of manuscripts. The minority were often maliciously altered by heretics, such as the Arians, and are not reliable texts. But this tragic minority is heralded as the “most reliable” by most modern Bible scholars!

If such were true, then we have not had God’s Word for hundreds or even thousands of years and still do not and *never* will have it since the minority texts often disagree with one another in many places. What, then, would Jesus’ promise in our text be? A lie. A deception. If Jesus was a liar, He was no sinless man. If Jesus was a sinner, He was no

Savior. Do you see what unbelief leads to? Deny the Verbal Inspiration and Providential Preservation of Scripture and you deny your own *salvation!* That is the result if one is to be consistent, even by human logic!

Why is the fact that we *still today* have the *true* Word of God so vitally important? “*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*” (Romans 10:17). Without the Word there can be no faith; without faith, no salvation. But, thanks be to God, He has preserved to us His Word, “*the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make [us] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*” (II Timothy 3:15). Our salvation is sure, for “*God, that cannot lie, promised*” (Titus 1:2a). The Apostle Peter declares: “*The Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the [lit., as] Gospel is preached unto you*” (I Peter 1:25).

God’s Word, the Holy Bible, is here to stay. On the basis of Holy Writ itself, we believe in the *plenary* (complete) *verbal* (word for word) inspiration of the Bible. We also believe, on the basis of our text and many other proof texts, in the *providential preservation* of God’s Word: God’s Word is here to stay! We, of all people, then should be like those to whom Paul is speaking when he says: “*For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the Word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe*” (I Thessalonians 2:13).

If we are such people, then there remains one final question for our self-examination: Since we have God’s own Word published publicly among us, how is it that we do not give it the full, zealous attention it deserves? Our minds wander. Our hearts waver. Our feet may never take us to Sunday Bible class. How is it that our actions do not coincide with our stated confession? We *all* need to repent in this regard and rededicate ourselves to the Word of Truth. God’s Word is here to stay. May we also stay with God’s Word, zealously faithful, by the very power and grace that the Word provides (Romans 10:17; John 8:31-32)!

God grant it, for Jesus’ sake, the only Savior and Redeemer of all men and, especially, of them who, by God’s grace alone, believe (I Timothy 4:10). In His saving Name, Amen.



CONVENTION DIGEST

(distilled from the minutes of the Convention)

MOTTO: “*The Providential Preservation of the Holy Scriptures*”

—I Peter 1:25



Appropriately named for the large tracts of native oak trees for which the area is known, the city of Oak Forest, a southern suburb near Chicago, Illinois, was the site of this year’s **Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention** of the **Concordia Lutheran Conference**.

Hosting the convention on the last weekend in June was **Peace Ev. Lutheran Church**, the Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor. Nestled among those oaks, the congregation’s church building and attached Christian Education Facility provided ample room for the convention services and sessions, for the delicious meals served by the ladies, and for wholesome recreational activities during “off hours.” Pastoral and lay delegates with their families, as well as visitors from as far west as Seattle and as far out east as Pennsylvania, gathered as dear brethren to do the work of the Lord’s kingdom-at-large and to enjoy their God-wrought fellowship in the opening devotions, in the various services, in their reception together of the Lord’s Supper, in their joint labors, and in their Christian sociability.

Immediately preceding the convention itself was a two-day **Pastoral Conference** on June 25th and 26th, at which the chief agenda item was a discussion and study of modern translations of the Bible and of particular practical problems associated with the use (particularly *publicly* and *officially*) of a multitude of translations in our preaching and teaching — provided, of course, that they are *reliable*. A special time had also been set aside to discuss the public variance of Pastor Daniel Mensing and his congregation, Good Shepherd of Tucson, concerning our consistent use of the *King James Version*, and particularly their adverse judgment of it as “*in an unknown tongue*” being unedifying, ineffective and even counter-productive to growth in grace and in Christian mission work, and to some even a *stumblingblock*. This judgment, of course, calls into question the ministry of the Word in the rest of the congregations, inasmuch as they use

the King James Version exclusively and consistently in their work. However, Pastor Daniel Mensing did not attend the Pastoral Conference to address and discuss this variance but only, at the very last minute, submitted by e-mail a letter in which he defended his and his congregation's preference for the New King James Version of 1982 without, however, retracting his offensive judgments against the KJV which the Board of Directors had, six months previously, addressed to him, but concerning which he never responded. The Pastoral Conference did, however, compile and adopt a series of statements concerning the unanimous agreement of the Conference congregations to use exclusively the King James Version; and these statements were also unanimously adopted both by the **Board of Directors** and by the **Conference** in convention assembled. [These statements will be included in the next issue of the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* but in the meantime are available from any of our pastors.]

As a separate matter in his letter, and completely “out the blue” without any previous notice or even an inkling, Pastor Mensing stated as a doctrinal issue his inability any longer to hold to the Scripture doctrine of ***Objective Justification***, concerning which he had expressed his unanimity with us in writing in 2013 but now rejects as being false doctrine. Because of this departure from the *Confessional Standard* of our Conference (*Constitution*, Article II), he stated that he cannot continue in doctrinal fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference. This severance of fellowship would be taken up by the **Board of Directors** on Thursday, June 27th. —The final session of the Pastoral Conference concerned questions of casuistry; and this session, per our usual custom, was reserved for the pastors only.

On Thursday, June 27th, the Conference **Board of Directors** held its annual business meeting to preview as usual the convention agenda and to hear in advance the general content of each standing committee's report. However, it first gave its attention to a draft resolution regarding the defection of Pastor Daniel P. Mensing. This resolution was unanimously adopted by a rising vote and, as a recommendation of the Board, would be presented on the floor of the Convention on Friday afternoon for the special consideration of the assembled delegates. The Board then considered the statements adopted by the Pastoral Conference about our exclusive use of the *King James Version*; and these were unanimously adopted for recommendation to the Conference in convention assembled. The remainder of the Board Meeting was then given to its regular and routine business.

The **Sixty-Eighth Annual Convention** officially began at 9:30 a.m. with a *Divine Worship Service of Convocation* in which the local Pastor, the Rev. David T. Mensing, served as the liturgist and the President of the Conference, the Rev. Edward J. Worley, delivered the sermon based on Matthew 24:35. His theme was: **God's Word, the Holy Bible, Is Here to Stay!** — which he divided into the following two parts from the text, **I:** *Though heaven and earth shall pass away. . .;* and **II:** *Christ's words shall not pass away.*

Following the service, the first session was called to order with a brief devotion conducted by the President. During this first brief session, *ad hoc* convention committees were appointed; the delegates were officially seated; and the assembled convention heard the *Annual Report of the President*. President Worley focused upon the precious freedom that we have as Christians—freedom from sin and its consequences. With regard to the *political freedom* that we enjoy as citizens of this country, it was mentioned that the earthly cost was high to attain such freedom and that vigilance is needed to maintain it. Concerning the *spiritual freedom* that we enjoy as Christians, the cost that purchased it for us was the precious blood of Christ. Vigilance is crucial to maintain also this freedom as we fight against dangerous and powerful spiritual enemies. In order for our Christian faith and freedom from sin and eternal punishment to be maintained, we must continue in God's Word, being spiritually strengthened and preserved by the Holy Ghost through the Means of Grace, the Gospel and Sacraments. The President exhorted the brethren to continue praying for our Conference that it may continue in the full truth of God's Word into the future. The Vice President, Pastor David T. Mensing, appointed as the *Committee to Review the President's Report* Pastor Robert J. Lietz and Mr. Raymond Kusumi. This committee would file its report later on in the convention. After several other matters of routine business including the official adoption of the Convention Agenda, the convention stood in recess for the noon meal served by the ladies of Peace Congregation.

The afternoon session opened with a brief devotion conducted by Pastor Robert J. Lietz of Oak Park, Illinois. The first order of business was the consideration of the *Recommendation of the Board of Directors*. The Secretary read a "*Unanimous Agreement of the Constituent Congregations of the Concordia Lutheran Conference to Use Exclusively the King James Version of the Scriptures,*" which the Board of Directors recommended to the Conference for action in Convention assembled. A motion was made and seconded to accept the agreement; and the motion was then adopted with a unanimous rising vote. (The agreement in its entirety will be printed in the next issue of the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*.)

Next, the Secretary read the resolution of the Board of Directors recognizing that Pastor Daniel P. Mensing of Tucson had severed fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference—objecting to the Scriptural teaching of *Objective Justification* and labeling it as false doctrine. We quote the concluding portion which specifically addresses the severance.

WHEREAS [Pastor Daniel P. Mensing] states that he now “reject[s] the teaching of Objective Justification as being false according to God’s Word” and recognizes that he “cannot continue in doctrinal fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference,” in spite of the fact that in 2013, while still a student in our seminary, he signed his pledge to hold, teach, profess, articulate and practice the doctrine of Objective Justification in full accord with Holy Scripture; and

WHEREAS he presented to his congregation in Tucson on Sunday, June 9th, a twelve-page presentation entitled “The Central Teaching of Justification by Faith,” in which he publicly declares us guilty of false doctrine, a copy of which he provided to every member of the Board of Directors together with his letter; and

WHEREAS he has, by this unilateral action, severed fellowship with and membership in our Conference by no longer accepting without reservation its Confessional Standard (*Constitution*, Article II) in doctrine and practice;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Pastor Daniel P. Mensing be recognized as having left our Conference contrary to our earnest prayers and hopes, and that the Conference receive into its record his letter and his printed presentation as evidence of his unilateral action of sinful separatism from our fellowship (I John 2:19).

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the resolution as presented, and the motion was carried with the unanimous, rising vote of all the delegates. [Please see the **Official Announcement** of the President regarding this sinful severance on pp. 121-122 of this issue.] After a brief recess, the Convention reconvened with the Vice President, Pastor David T. Mensing, chairing the meeting at the request of President Worley; and the Secretary then read the following resolution recommended by the Board of Directors to the Convention:

WHEREAS Pastor Daniel P. Mensing’s letter to the Board of Directors did not indicate Good Shepherd’s settled position on the matter of Objective Justification and therefore its doctrinal unity and continued fellowship with our Conference,

BE IT RESOLVED that we ask the Conference President to contact the congregation through its pastor, asking them to respond as soon as possible.

A motion was made, seconded, and carried to adopt the resolution.



The *Initial Report of the Finance Committee* concerned, first of all, the past fiscal year, as Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, the Conference Treasurer, presented the *Financial Report* for fiscal year 2018–2019. The report showed a beginning cash balance of \$15,207.68 in the *General Fund* plus total receipts of \$34,981.00, yielding total cash available of \$50,188.68. Expenditures totaled \$35,856.40, leaving an ending cash balance as of May 31, 2019 of \$14,332.28. The report also showed an increase in the *Student Aid Fund* from \$49,347.88 at the

beginning of the fiscal year to an ending balance of \$54,480.00 on its closing date, May 31, 2019. Total cash in all funds as of May 31, 2019: \$68,812.28. This report was received subject to audit.

The Treasurer then distributed the Finance Committee's *Budget Worksheet* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 2019 through May 31, 2020. It showed a beginning cash balance of \$14,332.28 and anticipated receipts (including the pledges of our congregations) of \$31,105.00, for an expected total cash available of \$45,437.28 in the *General Fund*. Projected budgetary expenditures totaled \$36,600.00, divided among the following items: *Scriptural Publications* Operations—\$1,500.00; Ekaterinburg Pastoral Salary Subsidy—\$12,000.00; Ekaterinburg Transportation Aid—\$2,400.00; St. Mark's Salary Subsidy—\$10,800.00; St. Mark's Emergency Grant—\$5,000.00; General Travel Expense—\$2,400.00; Convention Expense—\$1,000.00; and Miscellaneous Expenses—\$1,500.00. In the *Student Aid Fund*, the estimated income for the new year is \$2,400.00. —The *preliminary* budget proposal was adopted, subject to any subsequent amendment by the delegates in Convention assembled and pending final approval later in the Convention.

Then followed the *Report of the Editorial Committee* by Pastor David T. Mensing, its chairman, who briefly reviewed the content of our official organ, the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*. He described the function of the official organ of our Conference as giving testimony to the world of our God-given orthodoxy in consistent teaching and practice. In addition to the hard copies of the *C. L.* provided to the congregations of the Conference for their members and sent out also to subscribers, the articles are also published on the Conference website, and so are accessible



by people all over the world. The Editor encouraged the pastors to make their submission of articles a matter of priority on their schedules so that the Editor himself is not required to write articles which had not been submitted. The Editor expressed his thanks to the other members of his committee—Pastor Bloedel (Book and Tract Editor) and Mr. Jason Mabe (Lay Member). Mr. Phil Martin, Print Shop Manager of *Scriptural Publications*, was especially thanked for his work in the layout and printing of the *C. L.* The report was adopted.

The *Chairman of the Committee on Missions*, Pastor Lietz, gave his report, in which he mentioned that the congregation in Ekaterinburg, Russia, served by Pastor Roman Schurganoff, is no longer using rented facilities for their worship services. Instead, they are now holding their services in a “country home,” which has been provided for the congregation’s use by a new member. The money from the Conference that had been designated for the rental of their worship facilities is now being used to transport the



members from the city to that country house for worship on Sundays. Chairman Lietz mentioned that every month Pastor Schurganoff sends detailed reports including what he is preaching and teaching in his worship services and Bible classes. The congregation is requesting that the current monthly subsidy be continued at \$1,200.00 (including both the salary for the pastor and the cost of transportation to the country house for Sunday worship). It was also reported that Pastor Schurganoff no longer has a working computer, so he has been using a friend’s computer for his pastoral work. A substantial amount of money has been raised by the brethren to help him purchase a new computer. It was mentioned that Peace now has the ability to do bank-to-bank money transfers with Russia. The suggestion was made that Pastor Schurganoff send pictures of their new worship facility, as well as pictures of Pastor Schurganoff’s family that might be included in the *C. L.*

Concerning the brethren of St. Mark’s Ev. Lutheran Church in Sauk Village, IL, Pastor Lietz read a letter that he received from them in which they thanked the Conference for the subsidy assistance extended over many years. They have requested an increase in the monthly subsidy

from \$700.00 to \$800.00. Additionally, \$4,000.00 as an emergency relief grant to help pay off bills in arrears and unpaid pastoral salary was also requested by St. Mark's congregation. The Committee is suggesting an increase in the monthly subsidy amount for salary to \$900.00, and an emergency grant in the amount of \$5,000.00. During the discussion, it was mentioned that the pastor and laymen of St. Mark's are investigating what things might be able to be done so that the congregation might become more financially independent in the future. The Conference brethren were encouraged to remember St. Mark's congregation in their prayers.

Concerning our brethren in the FLCN, Pastor Lietz reported that the Nigerian congregations have had a very trying year; but "*we know that all things work together for good to them that love God*" (Romans 8:28). While they do not receive a monthly subsidy from the Conference, they greatly appreciate the generous donations from CLC congregations that have been given to help them with their financial needs. There are currently nine pastors and one deacon serving ten separate congregations in Nigeria. Additionally, there are currently eight seminary students in the FLCN—all taught by Pastor Fyneface. One of the former pastors was recently deposed because of persistent false teaching as well as ungodly living with no expressions of repentance. All of the Nigerian pastors have now received tablets preloaded with theological books and other material in electronic format. The health of Mrs. Fyneface has greatly improved since earlier in the year. The Conference brethren were reminded to keep our fellow Christians in Nigeria in our prayers. —The Committee's report was adopted; and, the agenda for the day having been completed, the Friday sessions were adjourned at 6:11 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer.



The Saturday morning sessions were opened with a devotion conducted by Pastor Paul E. Bloedel of Lebanon, Oregon. Thereupon Pastor Edward J. Worley of Seattle, the current President, began **Part I** of his *DOCTRINAL ESSAY* based thematically on the motto of our Convention, "*The Providential Preservation of Holy Scripture*" (I Peter 1:25). In his introduction, the essayist noted that the Bible itself testifies to its divine authorship; but the acceptance of this fact must be worked in the human heart by the Holy Ghost through the power that very Word.

The Lord tells us that the foundation of His Church is His Word (Ephesians 2:20). Therefore, if the Christian Church is to continue unto the end—which it will, according to God’s promise (Matthew 16:18)—then His Word must also continue unto the end. The many commands and exhortations of the Lord to use the Scriptures diligently for our own benefit and for that of our fellow human beings can only be followed if the Word of God is faithfully preserved to all generations. The term “*Scripture*” refers to what is *written*; and in the Christian context, it is the Word of God that He caused to be *written* by His Apostles and Prophets, the *written* word being the format in which He has chosen to *preserve* His Word. It was emphasized how important it is for laymen to use the Bible themselves and be guided by it alone and to make sure that their pastors are consistently teaching only that which is in full accord with God’s faithfully preserved Word. If an erring pastor refuses to be corrected by the Word of God, then he needs to be marked and avoided (Romans 16:17–18).



After a brief break, the essay was resumed. The Essayist pointed out that, during the public ministry of Christ, He used the divinely preserved Scriptures of the Old Testament. He furthermore commissioned His disciples to make disciples of all nations through Bap-

tism and through the teaching His Word. This can only be done if His Word is faithfully preserved! And if the people of “*all nations*” are going to be *made disciples* and edified by God’s Word, then it needs to be put into languages that they can understand. Through the power of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles were given perfect recall of all that Jesus had taught them, so they were able, even in foreign languages, to convey the words of the Lord perfectly to others in their preaching and in their writings. —The remainder of the essay was reserved for Sunday afternoon.

Reporting for the *Committee on Lutheran Union*, its chairman, Pastor David T. Mensing, stated that he had received inquiries, originally directed to President Worley, from two church groups in Africa seeking information about fellowship and union with our Conference. He responded to them with information about our Conference’s confessional position, history and programs; but upon further investigation, includ-

ing receiving no answer back in response to the Committee's letter and to the chairman's statement concerning unity as the basis for fellowship, the chairman came to the conclusion that they were not really interested in true doctrinal unity with us, but rather in receiving financial and logistic support from us. The committee always stands ready (and eagerly hopes) to receive and to respond to serious inquires about establishing true doctrinal fellowship with us on the basis of God's Word, but those seem to be few and far between. The report was adopted.

The delegates then heard the *Report of the Committee on Theological Education* chaired by Pastor Edward J. Worley. In his brief oral report he mentioned that he has requested the two seminary professors to send him materials that they had developed and used with their students in the past. The point was stressed that if a man shows interest in studying in our seminary, and another of the pastors (who had not previously taught) needs to become a professor quickly, it would be helpful to have the teaching materials generated by the former professors readily available for use. It was also mentioned that the professors might try to enlist the help of some of their laymen to help them if needed with the collection and possible scanning of the teaching materials that they developed through a great deal of time and energy spent over their years of teaching. The report was adopted, and the convention recessed for the noon lunch hour.

After an opening devotion conducted by Pastor David J. Mensing of Sauk Village, Illinois, the *Report of the Board of Control of Scriptural Publications* was presented by its chairman, Pastor Robert J. Lietz. He expressed thanks to the Lord for providing our Conference with the ability to print and distribute important Scriptural content for those both inside and outside our Conference — all to the glory of God's grace in Christ Jesus. He drew special attention to the daily devotions that can be accessed through text message or e-mail alerts or even as a hardcopy printed version upon request. *Scriptural Publications* recently reprinted a number of copies of the revised and updated *Pastor's Companion*. It is planned to reprint also the following devotional books: *The Burden Made Light*, *The Yoke Made Easy*, and *Treasures of Hope*. Chairman Lietz thanked the Print Shop Manager, Mr. Phillip Martin, and the Business Manager, Mr. Martin Trusty, for their generous contributions of time and energy in producing printed materials and in maintaining the on-line content on the Conference website. Chairman Lietz also thanked Peace congregation for providing the space needed for the equipment and operations of *Scriptural Publications* and for paying the utility bills connected with the use of that equipment. He also thanked the Conference for this past

year's subsidy of \$1,500.00. The committee's report was adopted.

Mr. Martin Trusty, the *Business Manager of Scriptural Publications*, presented his report, which consisted in his detailed balance sheet summarizing the finances of our Publishing House. The report showed a beginning cash balance of \$2,142.19, total receipts of \$4,151.50, total expenditures of \$4,542.64, and an ending balance of \$1,751.05. The report was adopted subject to audit.

FURTHER REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

The Conference Treasurer distributed Budget work sheets to those who had not received them the previous day. He mentioned a change under *Miscellaneous Expenses* from 1,500.00 to 2,500.00, bringing the projected *Total Expenses* to \$37,600.00. The Treasurer acknowledged that there is a certain amount of deficit spending on paper; but he still feels comfortable recommending the Budget since congregations typically exceed their pledges. A motion was made, seconded, and carried to receive the interim report of the Finance Committee.

A recess was taken at 2:12 p.m.

The convention then proceeded to the *Election of Officers and Standing Committees* for 2019-2020. The following were elected:

PRESIDENT: The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel

VICE PRESIDENT: The Rev. Robert J. Lietz

SECRETARY: The Rev. David T. Mensing

TREASURER: Mr. Robert G. Bloedel

BOARD MEMBERS-AT-LARGE: **Midwest**—Mr. Karl P. Mensing; **Far West**— Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi

EDITORIAL COMMITTEE: Pastor David T. Mensing, *C. L.* Editor; Pastor Robert J. Lietz, Book and Tract Editor; and Mr. Jason A. Mabe, Lay Member.

COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION: Pastor Lietz, Chairman; Pastor Mensing; Pastor Bloedel; and Mr. Jason Mabe.

COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION: Pastor Bloedel, Chairman; Pastor Lietz; Mr. Jason Mabe; and Mr. Daniel Bloedel.

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS: Pastor Lietz, Chairman; Pastor Bloedel; Mr. Phillip Martin; Mr. Dale Peterson; and Mr. Raymond Kusumi.

FINANCE COMMITTEE: Mr. Robert Bloedel, Chairman; Mr. Tom Fedor; Mr. Phillip Martin, and Mr. Jerry Sidwell.

PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL: Pastor Lietz, Chairman; Mr. Martin L. Trusty, Business Manager; and Mr. Phillip R. Martin, Print Shop Manager.

At the Sunday morning service, the host pastor again served as liturgist; and Pastor Paul Bloedel preached the sermon on **I Peter 1:22-25**. His theme, taken from the words of the text, was: *“The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever.”* He divided the sermon into two parts: **I. God’s Word is described as the imperishable Seed by which we are brought to saving faith,** and **II. The ever-enduring Word of God outlasts humans and all**



their glory. Delegates and visitors from the congregations of our fellowship then partook of the Lord’s Supper together as guests of Peace Congregation—for the remission of their sins, for the strengthening of their faith and of their walk in sanctification, and in testimony of their blessed unity in the Word of their Savior.

After a sumptuous dinner, served buffet-style by the ladies of the congregation, sessions reconvened with a devotion conducted by Pastor David T. Mensing of Oak Forest, Illinois. Thereafter, Pastor Worley continued the presentation of His essay, finishing the first part and then taking up the final brief part to its conclusion. The essayist pointed out that God’s divine integrity, that is, His faithfulness in keeping His promises, caused Him to have recorded in writing and to preserve forever the revelation of Himself and His attributes, including His oath to preserve His Word as an anchor to the souls of men. But the *ultimate* reason why He preserved His Word is His *primary will*, namely, His earnest desire that all men be saved by the knowledge of His Gospel-truth. Without His efficacious Word, preserved to all generations, not a single soul (beyond Adam and

Eve) could ever be saved. Therefore God has done and will continue to do all that is necessary to preserve His Word for this clear and manifest purpose: The salvation of mankind.

After a brief recess, Pastor Worley concluded his essay. Believers are convinced by the *prooftexts* that God promised to preserve His Word and indeed made good on that promise. They are not convinced by historical artifacts, extra-Biblical evidence, or secular scholarship, but by confidence in the Word itself. God's guarantees are not subject to empirical proof, and the reliability of the text does not rely upon the opinions of men, however qualified they imagine themselves to make that judgment. Faith in the reliability and preservation of the text of Scripture rests solely upon God's integrity, God's primary will, and God's divine ability to accomplish that which He pleases (Isaiah 55:11). Instead of including the matter of *translations* in his presentation, the essayist directed the delegates and visitors to the recent article in the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* (May-June 2019) by Pastor David T. Mensing entitled, "Is the Bible in *Translation* Still the Authoritative and Efficacious Word of God?" In concluding his essay, Pastor Worley recalled anecdotally that he learned as a student in college how the verbal inspiration and divine preservation of the Word of God was being systematically attacked and how many lost their faith by believing Satan's lies instead of the word of God's truth. Only by God's grace in and through His Word had he been kept from falling into the same trap. We dare not be unmindful of Satan's devices, lest he gain "strategic advantage" against us (II Corinthians 2:11)!

Although it did not properly belong to the consideration of the essay as such and was not part of the official agenda, the chairman permitted a brief digression into a discussion of Pastor Daniel P. Mensing's sinful separation from our fellowship on the basis of his rejection of *Objective Justification*. Pastor Worley moderated the discussion. The doctrine itself was briefly defined in simple terms and was shown to be completely Scriptural according to the *sedes* passages. It was also pointed out that the teaching of "justification *by faith*" — faith being the *receiving means* of justification — is not compromised or denied by the teaching of "*objective* (or *general*) justification" inasmuch as a penitent sinner would have **no OBJECT** for his **faith**, nothing to **confide in**, if Christ's all-sufficient and complete *propitiation* for the sins of the "*whole world*" (I John 2:2) had **resulted in nothing**, if it had not in fact purchased and won forgiveness for every sinner and righteousness for the "*ungodly*" (Romans 4:5; 5:19). The *vicarious atonement* would then have only been a gesture of self-sacrificial love on Jesus' part but

insufficient to “*take away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). The pastors were urged to review the doctrine of justification with their congregations so that no one is troubled by the cavil that is likely to be spread, particularly on social media, regarding Pastor Dan Mensing’s defection.

Following that discussion, Pastor Worley’s essay was received with the thanks of the convention, subject to polish and the usual review before publication.

The *Auditing Committee* then presented its report concerning the books of the Conference Treasurer and the books of *Scriptural Publications’* Business Manager, and reported that it found all the records to be in good order.

The proposed budget of the *Finance Committee* then received final adoption as previously presented. The figures remained as follows: Projected budgetary expenditures totaled \$36,600.00 divided among the following items: *Scriptural Publications* Operations—\$1,500.00; Ekaterinburg Pastoral Salary Subsidy—\$12,000.00; Ekaterinburg Transportation Aid—\$2,400.00; St. Mark’s Salary Subsidy—\$10,800.00; St. Mark’s Emergency Grant—\$5,000.00; General Travel Expense—\$2,400.00; Convention Expense—\$1,000.00; and Miscellaneous Expenses—\$2,500.00, \$1,000.00 of which is earmarked to reimburse Phillip Martin for the purchase of “tablets” for the Nigerian pastors and eventually for their seminary students as well. It was felt that the Conference as a body should participate in this effort. In the *Student Aid Fund*, the estimated income for the new year is \$2,400.00.

Mr. Ray Kusumi, the *Conference Statistician*, then presented his report for 2018-2019, and this was unanimously adopted. Mr. Kusumi was also reappointed to his position by resolution of the convention.

The *Committee to Review the President’s Report* found the President Worley’s report to have been timely and edifying.

The *Resolutions Committee* then presented the following resolutions of thanks, all of which were unanimously adopted: **#1:** Thanks to Pastor Edward J. Worley for his edifying essay; **#2:** thanks for the sermons by Pastors Worley and Bloedel; **#3:** thanks for the opening devotions conducted by the pastors;

#4: thanks to those who faithfully served as officers during the past fiscal year; **#5:** a prayer for God's blessings upon the work of newly-elected officers; **#6:** thanks to Mr. Mark Mensing, the virtual organist of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, for the special organ music which beautified the services and devotions held at the convention, to Mr. John Mensing, Peace's choir director, and to the choir of mixed voices from Peace and from guest congregations which sang in the convention worship services; and **#7:** thanks to Pastor and Mrs. David T. Mensing and to Peace Ev. Lutheran Church for their loving and generous hospitality in hosting the Convention.

The *Final Report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses* indicated that five congregations were represented at this convention by five pastoral delegates, eight lay delegates, and six alternate delegates who were actually present. Total number of votes cast on any measure was 15. Total attendance at the Friday service was sixty-four and at the Sunday service ninety-one. Sixty-five souls communed as guests of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church. Total offerings at the Friday service to the benefit of the Conference General Treasury were \$ 885.00, and at the Sunday service to benefit the local congregation, \$ 2,476.00.

The convention also unanimously accepted the gracious invitation of St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Seattle, Washington, to host the **69th Annual Convention** (June 26, 27 and 28, 2020), immediately preceded as usual by the *Plenary Pastoral Conference* on June 23rd and 24th, and the *Board of Directors Meeting* on June 25th. Our people are encouraged *NOW ALREADY* to mark these dates on their calendars, so that they can plan ahead to attend.

After the minutes of the Sunday sessions were read by the Secretary and received subject to polish, and after several brief announcements, adjournment followed at 5:00 p.m. with a closing devotion conducted by President Bloedel consisting of the singing of Hymn 552, the reading of Psalm 90, a prayer, the usual closing formula, and the Apostolic Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Secretary

Sermon for the Sunday Convention Service

Preached by Pastor Paul E. Bloedel, Lebanon, Oregon

Text: **I Peter 1:22–25**



The Word of God, specifically the Gospel of salvation, is a priceless treasure that God has graciously given us in order to show us the only way to heaven, which is by faith in Christ Jesus. Through the Gospel the Holy Ghost creates the faith that receives the promised blessings of forgiveness and eternal life that our dear Lord Jesus earned for us by His perfect life and by His innocent suffering and death on the cross. Though all people in their natural state of unbelief regard the Gospel as foolishness (I Corinthians 2:14), we Christians, through the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost, have learned that it is more valuable than any earthly treasure. While earthly treasures can only bring passing joys and temporary pleasure, the Word of God conveys lasting comfort and joy, even in times of great distress. And in the hour of death, when earthly treasures are more easily seen to have very little value, the Gospel provides the greatest comfort and strength to the person who trusts its message of God's saving grace.

Not only do the joys conveyed by worldly things pale in comparison to the joy conveyed by the Gospel of Christ, but the earthly treasures themselves simply do not last. The newest cars get old and break down; the most cutting edge piece of technology quickly becomes outdated and is soon regarded as junk; the nicest clothes get old and worn out. Even the children of this world know this to be true, which is why newer products continue to be made and sold and eagerly bought by the consumers of those products. When we Christians consider how the highly prized and highly priced things of this world still break, wear out, or get stolen, we are reminded how foolish it is to set our hearts upon them, as Jesus says in His *Sermon on the Mount*: “*Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal*” (Matthew 6:19).

Unlike such earthly things, the great treasure that we have in the Word of God is one that will never perish, fade away, or drop out of existence. Even though all the host of hell and all the unbelievers on the planet may seek to destroy His Word, the Lord will never let that happen. For as we are told in the words of our text for this morning:

“The Word of the Lord Endureth Forever”

On the basis of this text, we shall first consider the point that **I.** God’s Word is described as the imperishable Seed by which we are brought to saving faith; and, secondly, that **II.** the ever-enduring Word of God outlasts humans and all their glory.

I.

Our text begins by highlighting the sanctifying work of the Holy Ghost — how He renews Christians in their hearts and lives. We read: *“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently”* (v. 22). Now it might seem odd that this verse talks about Christians purifying their souls, since numerous other passages of Scripture make it clear that it is God who purifies our hearts and lives (I Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5; Psalm 51:10). Yes, God is the one who deserves all of the credit and the glory for purifying our souls by bringing us to faith in Jesus (Acts 15:9; I Corinthians 12:3) and by causing us both to will and to do of His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13).

And yet, we Christians are told in our text: *“Seeing ye have purified your souls...see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.”* It is important to remember that we Christians believe in Jesus as our Savior (the Holy Ghost does not believe for us); and we Christians perform works pleasing to God as a fruit of our faith (the Holy Ghost does not do those good works for us). But it is also important to remember that God is the one who creates and preserves saving faith within us (we do not have the power to do that); and it is God who moves us to follow His Commandments by the love of Christ (we cannot self-generate the ability or desire to follow His Law). And Peter brings out these separate points in the first verse of our text, where we read: *“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit.”*

The way that this work of the Holy Ghost shows itself in our day-to-day lives is by producing the fruits of love. Such love is to be, as our text for this morning describes it, *“unfeigned”* (sincere, without hypocrisy); and it is to be *“fervent”* (intense, not cold or lukewarm). Thus Peter

writes in our text: “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure [clean] heart fervently*” (v. 22). Since Peter’s Christian readers had been sanctified by the Holy Ghost — having been brought to saving faith in Jesus and having had the image of God’s holiness renewed in their new man— they did produce such works of love in their lives, as all true Christians do. So Peter here encourages them to *grow* in such fruits of love. The Apostle James says in his epistle that any religion that does not produce works of love in accordance with God’s Commandments is “*vain*” (1:26), and that any faith that does not produce such works of love is “*dead*” (2:17, 20, 26). So you and I, as Christians, bring forth works of love in *our* lives as well. However, it is to our shame that we do not always show that love in how we speak and act, on account of the influence of our sinful flesh. So we should take to heart the exhortation of our text to become more fruitful in good works and “*love one another with a pure clean heart fervently,*” out of love for the Savior.

The work of the Holy Ghost whereby a person is brought to saving faith in Jesus is described in Scripture as “*regeneration*” — bringing about a *new birth*. And in the next verse of our text, Peter focuses upon the means used by the Holy Ghost to work that new birth of faith, namely, God’s Word. We read: “*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever*” (v. 23). It is the Word of God, specifically the Gospel (v. 25), through which the Holy Ghost causes sinful, fleshly “*children of wrath*” (Ephesians 2:3) —which is how we all are in our *natural* state— to be born anew as children of God and heirs of heaven. That is a divine work, which no corruptible seed, no work or effort of sinful man, could ever accomplish. Accordingly, the Apostle John writes that the new birth of faith is brought about “*not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*” (John 1:13). And, again, our text says that the means used by God to regenerate us in the saving Christian faith is His Word.

Notice that the Word of God is here described as being an “*incorruptible,*” or imperishable, “*Seed, which liveth and abideth forever.*” This attribute of God’s Word, that it will continue to live forever and never perish, is the focus of this year’s convention. The Lord has preserved His Word from the time that He caused it to be written by inspiration of the Holy Ghost through the Apostles and Prophets, down to this present day; and He will certainly continue to preserve it all the

way through the very last day of this world's existence. Yes, even on Judgment Day itself, the Word of the Lord will be present and will be the standard of divine judgment according to which every human will be declared either guilty or innocent (John 12:48). "*The Word of God...liveth and abideth forever!*"

What a comfort it is for us to know that we will continue to be able to use and to be edified by God's holy Word all the rest of our lives! And the same holds true for our children and for their children after them (for as many generations as the Lord has determined to be born before He brings this world to an end). Yes, even if—but may God graciously prevent this from happening— even if our beloved Conference would become corrupted with false doctrine and dissolve, and even if the devil succeeds in pulling our individual congregations into heterodoxy, God's inspired Word, Holy Scripture, will not be destroyed. So people will still be able to have saving faith in Christ generated, strengthened, and preserved in them for their souls' salvation through that "*incorruptible seed*" of God's Word!

II.

Our text presents a clear contrast between God's incorruptible, ever-enduring Word and corruptible, perishable sinful mortals when it says that we Christians have been born again "*not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible.*" And as our text continues, this great contrast is further described on the basis of Isaiah 40:6–8; and we are shown that the things here contrasted are as drastically different from each other as night is from day. We read: "*For 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*" (vv. 24–25).

The passing of time brings about much change in ourselves and in the physical world around us. In some stages of life, the changes that take place may be positive and encouraging—such as becoming better at a task, wiser in how we handle difficult situations, stronger and having greater endurance as a result of physical exercise, and so on. However, the changes that take place will eventually go in the other direction—we will grow older and weaker until finally our lives here on earth draw to a close, just as "*the grass withereth.*"

The earthly lives of humans do not last long at all in comparison to the duration of the world; and, of course, even the entire duration of the world is nothing in comparison to eternity! The Apostle James writes: "*What is your life? It is even a vapor that appeareth for a little time*

and then vanisheth away” (4:14). And most people, especially if they have already lived a number of years, realize that their lives will be over before too long. Even if they live another twenty, thirty, or fifty years, that time will fly by quickly. And then they are gone from this earth. The Bible says: *“As for man, his days are as grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more”* (Psalm 103:15–16).

Very few people are remembered or spoken of when fifty to one hundred years have passed after they die. Knowing that to be the case, many people make it their goal to create a “legacy” that will extend beyond their own lives, desiring to make a lasting name for themselves, working to accomplish something that they hope will cause them to be remembered long after they have died —something glorious! So do the glorious accomplishments of people really last for a long time in the world after they themselves are gone? After our text declares that we humans are like grass, what does it say *“all the glory of man”* is like? It says that *“all the glory of man”* is *“as the flower of grass”* that *“falleth away.”* Yes, the wild flowers of the field indeed look pretty; but they don’t last very long. Relatively quickly, humans and all their glory pass away and are forgotten. The Bible says: *“The memory of them is forgotten”* (Ecclesiastes 9:5).

But what if someone is especially wise? Will he be long remembered because he was wise? The Bible says: *“There is no remembrance of the wise more than of the fool forever, seeing that which now is in the days to come shall all be forgotten. And how dieth the wise man? As the fool”* (Ecclesiastes 2:16).

But none of those things should depress us or fill us with great sadness. Acknowledging what our text says about the shortness of human life on this present earth should not upset us because of what our text assures us will last forever, namely, God’s precious Word. *“The Word of the Lord endureth forever!”* This is true of both the Old Testament and the New Testament. It does not matter that the Bible was written thousands of years ago; His Word stands just as true and authoritative as ever. Advances in science and new theories of *“science falsely so called”* (I Timothy 6:20) do not require the Scriptures to be updated, modernized, or adapted to conform with the latest theories. Changes in culture, the morality of the times, or modern, worldly definitions of right and wrong do not require us to modify the Bible’s clear declarations of what is evil and what is good. No human has the right to change or twist or update

any portion of the Scriptures to suit his own private opinions, “*for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*” (II Peter 1:21).

And that is precisely the point! Because the Bible is the inspired Word of the Lord God, it is, in all of its words and parts, as faithful and unchangeable as its divine Author. Though this certainly applies also to God’s holy Law, the last sentence of our text puts the focus specifically upon the Gospel. We read: “*And this is the Word which by the [lit., as] Gospel is preached unto you*” (v. 25). So “*the Word of the Lord*” that “*endureth forever*” is here identified as the very Gospel that was preached from the mouth of Peter and his fellow Apostles, which was also written in their various epistles. That is the good news of complete forgiveness of all our sins for the sake of the substitutional life and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which full atonement for the sins of the world was made, and through which the whole world has been reconciled to God (II Corinthians 5:19). The writings of the Apostles and Prophets are the very Word of God, since they were written by verbal (word for word) inspiration of the Holy Ghost. And thankfully, the glorious promises of the Gospel have no expiration date. It is the same Gospel of forgiveness for the sake of the Redeemer by which every Christian who has ever lived, or who ever will live, is saved.

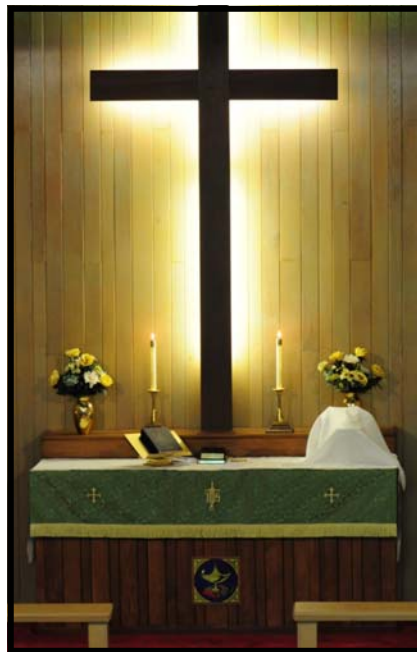
We should not have any doubts concerning the preservation of God’s Word, since His promise to do so is faithful and His power to do so is more than capable. Yes, the Lord God Himself has seen to it that the Scriptures would not be lost—using human beings to make copies of the Bible that have been transmitted from generation to generation. And through translation into many different languages, God has caused His Word to be spread throughout the world. You and I have the Word of God among us today in our wonderful English translation of Holy Scripture (the *King James Version*). And God will make sure that the generations after us will also have His Word available to them. His Word will continue till the end of time. “*The Word of the Lord endureth forever!*”

But simply having a printed copy of God’s Word on our bookshelf does not profit us. Simply having a Bible “app” on our phone will not edify us. Simply being a member of a faithful church and putting in an appearance every Sunday, if our ears are closed to the Word when it is preached, is neither beneficial to us nor is it pleasing to the Lord. People who do such things “*give the sacrifice of fools,*” God says

(Ecclesiastes 5:1). We need to take His Word into our hearts and minds in order for our Christian faith to be strengthened and preserved thereby. Jesus says: “*Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it* [guard and hold it in their hearts by faith]” (Luke 11:28).

We should never take for granted the great blessing that we have through God’s faithful preservation of His Word down to this present day; but we should grow in our appreciation of this precious gift and make good use of it —reading and studying it, meditating upon it, and applying it in our daily lives. And let us greatly rejoice in the knowledge that His Word will continue to be preserved by the Lord’s power and grace for every future generation until the end of world! Amen.

Soli Deo gloria!



Announcement of Sinful Separation

“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.” —I John 2:19

In a written statement to the Board of Directors of the *Concordia Lutheran Conference* dated June 27, 2019, Pastor Daniel P. Mensing declared: “I find that [sic] cannot hold to the teaching of Objective Justification, namely that God has already declared all people to be righteous in His sight, whether they believe in Christ or not”; and: “Because I reject the teaching of Objective Justification as being false according to God’s Word, I recognize that I cannot continue in doctrinal fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference.” This he submitted over his own signature, with no church officers or voters adding their signatures to the document.

With a rising vote of the entire Board of Directors of the *Concordia Lutheran Conference* (on June 27th) and of all the pastors and delegates in convention assembled (on June 28th) the following two resolutions were **unanimously adopted**:

(Only the “WHEREAS” paragraphs which pertain to this specific issue are included below.)

WHEREAS he states that he now “reject[s] the teaching of Objective Justification as being false according to God’s Word” and recognizes that he “cannot continue in doctrinal fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference,” in spite of the fact that in 2013, while still a student in our seminary, he signed his pledge to hold, teach, profess, articulate and practice the doctrine of Objective Justification in full accord with Holy Scripture; and

WHEREAS he presented to his congregation in Tucson on Sunday, June 9th, a twelve-page presentation entitled “The Central Teaching of Justification by Faith,” in which he publicly declares us guilty of false doctrine, a copy of which he provided to every member of the Board of Directors together with his letter; and

WHEREAS he has, by this unilateral action, severed fellowship with and membership in our Conference by no longer accepting

without reservation its Confessional Standard (*Constitution*, Article II) in doctrine and practice;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Pastor Daniel P. Mensing be recognized as having left our Conference contrary to our earnest prayers and hopes, and that the Conference receive into its record his letter and his printed presentation as evidence of his unilateral action of sinful separatism from our fellowship (I John 2:19).

In a separate action, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS Pastor Daniel P. Mensing's letter to the Board of Directors did not indicate Good Shepherd's settled position on the matter of Objective Justification, and thereby its doctrinal unity and continued fellowship with our Conference;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we ask the Conference President to contact the congregation through its Pastor, asking them to respond as soon as possible.

A letter from the Conference President together with the other members of the *Concordia Lutheran Conference* Board of Directors was sent to Good Shepherd congregation, through its Pastor, on July 9, 2019 in which the following question was asked:

“Are you abandoning your long-held, Scriptural position on the doctrine of Objective Justification and following the new teaching of your Pastor, or are you holding fast to your historical Scriptural belief in the doctrine of Objective Justification and rejecting the new teaching of your Pastor contrary to it?”

As of the publication of this announcement, we have not yet received a response from the congregation. Let us all continue to pray that they will not be led astray from the truth that they had learned from the Word of God, and had long confessed with us, concerning the most comforting doctrine of Objective Justification. We furthermore pray that their Pastor may be quickly recovered from his error and corrected by God's Word of truth so that the devil's efforts to spread false doctrine and undermine the Gospel at Good Shepherd may be ultimately thwarted.

—Paul E. Bloedel, Conference President

God's Justification of the Sinner

— Objectively and Subjectively

During man's *time of grace*, God's declaration of His "*merciful and gracious*" (Exodus 34:6-7) forgiveness, His unilateral *reconciliation of the world unto Himself* by non-imputation of sin (II Corinthians 5:19) to the "*ungodly*" (Romans 4:5b) — *objectively* given to **all mankind** already in eternity for the sake and in view of Christ's perfect propitiation of divine justice in the stead and in the place of **ALL** (I John 2:2; Revelation 13:8) — **IS the forensic, judicial status that He has granted to ALL** (Romans 3:24) for Christ's sake — *objective justification*. Justification is **God's** to give (Romans 8:33) as the aggrieved party in man's fall from holiness.

This gracious and merciful, *universal amnesty* is announced to **all men** in the **Gospel** (II Corinthians 5:19b, Titus 2:11; Romans 10:18), the "*giving means*" of His grace [*medium *@46` <*] for the knowledge of this blessed truth unto salvation (I Timothy 2:4; Luke 1:77; 2:30-31; Acts 28:28).

However, this "*Word of Reconciliation*" (II Corinthians 5:19b) is not mere information. God has **ordained** that His gift of *reconciliation*, including the righteousness of Christ earned by Him for all mankind by His vicarious **active obedience** (Romans 5:19) and the remission of sins purchased by Him for the world in His vicarious **passive obedience** (Isaiah 53; I Peter 1:18-20) be **APPREHENDED** (I Timothy 6:12) and **RECEIVED** (Acts 10:43) "*by*" or "*through*" **faith** (Romans 3:28; Ephesians 2:8; Galatians 3:8; II Corinthians 5:20; etc.) which lays hold on, accepts, receives and confides in the gift as the "*garments of salvation*" (Isaiah 61:10), the "*wedding garment*" in which all must be clothed to receive eternal life (Matthew 22:11-14). **Faith** is therefore the "*receiving means*" whereby God's grace is appropriated [*medium 8OBJ46` <*].

Justifying and therefore **saving faith** is properly and briefly defined as "confidence of the heart in the mercy of God which forgives sins for Christ's sake, totally apart from the works of the Law." This faith thus gratefully **acknowledges**, humbly **accepts**, confidently **lays hold on**, and personally **receives** what God proffered to all mankind, to His enemies, in eternity: His full and free, unconditional, merciful and gracious reconciliation, including pardon and imputed righteousness, for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction of divine justice in their place and in their stead. "*By faith*" the sinner **takes**, personally has for himself, and is effectively **clad**

in the “*wedding garment of salvation*” in which he can “*stand in the judgment... in the congregation of the righteous*” (Psalm 1:5), a child of God (Galatians 3:26) and an heir of everlasting life (John 3:16b, 36).

Since it is God Himself who *works saving faith* in the heart of a contrite sinner (Philippians 2:13) through the powerful means of the Gospel, “*the Word of Reconciliation*” (II Corinthians 5:19b; Romans 1:16; 10:17; etc.), it is truly **God** who thereby *establishes* him *subjectively* in his **justified** status, grants to him the **EFFECT** of that status so that there is “*no condemnation to [him]*” (Romans 8:1), and recognizes him to be a “*saint,*” an “*heir of salvation,*” who, having “*endure[d] unto the end,*” will stand as “*blessed of [the] Father*” on Christ’s right hand in the judgment (Matthew 25:34). Therefore, although God had *objectively justified all mankind IN ETERNITY* for Christ’s sake by His forensic declaration of pardon and reconciliation, He *subjectively justifies BELIEVERS IN TIME* “*by*” or “*through faith*” (Romans 3:22, 26-28; 4:16; 5:1; 9:30; Galatians 3:8, 14; etc.) by creating and preserving in them the confidence that, as the “*receiving means*” of God’s grace, lays hold on the blessings of redemption, justification, true righteousness before God, and ultimate salvation earned by Christ and granted by God *in Him* to all the world. (Cf. Philippians 3:8-9).

The “*time*” of *grace* [“*while it is today*” (Hebrews 3:12-15), etc.] is that time of opportunity extended to mankind by God, “*who is longsuffering [toward us], not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*” (II Peter 3:9), during which the Gospel, the good news of *objective justification*, is to be proclaimed in all the world to every creature (Mark 16:15; Luke 24:47; etc.) **AND** during which God earnestly *beseeches* (II Corinthians 5:20) all men to *repent* and to *obey*, that is, *believe* the Gospel (Mark 1:15). This time is not to be ignored and squandered in complacency, indifference, carnal security, and unbelief, lest the Last Day, the *day of judgment* come upon men unawares (Luke 21:34; cf. Matthew 25:1-13; etc.). For then the opportunity to receive God’s gift of universal amnesty (*objective justification*) by faith will be past; the unconditional “*blanket*” pardon will no longer be “*on the table;*” the “*door*” will be “*shut*” (Matthew 25:10); the time of grace will have expired.

Those who by means of God-wrought **faith** were **effectively** “*justified*” by Him, that is, brought by Him into **personal possession** of the reconciliation, justification, forgiveness and imputed righteousness merited by Christ and declared as God’s gift to all the world in Him (Cf. Philippians 3:8-9), will be admitted into “*the kingdom prepared for [them] from the foundation of the world*” (Matthew 25:34).

BUT those who did not obey the Gospel (Romans 10:16), who refused God's reconciliation (Acts 13:46), who would rather have been justified by the Law (Galatians 5:4); who denied Christ and His *vicarious atonement* for their redemption (II Peter 2:1), who presumed to enter into the marriage supper of the Lamb of God not having on, by faith, the "*wedding garment*" (Matthew 22:11ff.) of Christ's imputed righteousness and His *vicarious atonement*, the "*garments of salvation*" (Isaiah 61:10), who did not believe in the only-begotten Son of God (John 3:18), etc. — will, on account of their unbelief, be consigned to the "*everlasting punishment*" of hell (Matthew 25:46). They rejected His mercy and therefore will be seen *only* through the eyes of God's **JUSTICE**.

Unbelief of the Gospel not only refuses, rejects, and therefore forfeits the "*reconciliation*" that God in eternity, for Christ's sake, proffered to "*the world*" (II Corinthians 5:19), but it is an effrontery, an insult, to God, who of His abundant grace and mercy in Christ "*loved the world*" (John 3:16) and did everything necessary for man's salvation. Therefore the damnation of unbelievers, who are, by their rejection of God's grace, "*wicked,*" "*enemies,*" "*children of wrath,*" etc., will be the "*flaming fire*" of God's "*vengeance*" upon them (II Thessalonians 1:8-10). "*He that believeth not shall be damned*" (Mark 16:16).

While this summary is by no means an exhaustive treatment of the **doctrine of justification**, nor is it intended to be, it shows that there is **ONLY ONE** "justification" — *objectively* and universally **proffered** by God in eternity *to all the world* in Christ, before and not conditional upon faith but wrought on account of and in view of Christ's propitiation for the sins of the whole world (I John 2:2) — **AND subjectively effected** by God *in the individual* "*by faith*" ("*that it may be by grace*" — Romans 4:16), so that the believer **has**, for their **effect** in the judgment and for his own "*peace with God*" (Romans 5:1), forgiveness of sins, righteousness before God, and the status of being a child of God, a saint, and an heir of eternal life.

“Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable Gift!”

— II Corinthians 9:15

Soli Deo gloria!

— D. T. M.

Churches in Fellowship

ORTHODOX LUTHERAN CHURCH OF EKATERINBURG

Ekaterinburg, Russia
The Rev. Roman G. Schurganoff, Pastor
P. O. Box 27
620039 Ekaterinburg, RUSSIA
E-mail: Schurganoff@mail.ru

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
E-Mail: kariboinnocent@yahoo.com

SALEM LUTHERAN CHURCH

Abalama, Nigeria
The Rev. Bateinm Bestman, Pastor
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
E-Mail: tbaaron2@gmail.com

ST. MATTHEW'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

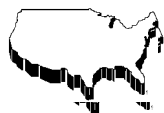
Port Harcourt, Nigeria
(Pastoral Vacancy at present)
76 Abba Street, Mile 1 Diobu
Port Harcourt, Rivers State, NIGERIA

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. Fyeface, Pastor
P. O. Box 123
Abonnema, Akulga, Rivers State, NIGERIA
E-Mail: njohnfyeface@yahoo.co.uk



Directory of Member Congregations

www.concordialutheranconf.com

GOOD SHEPHERD EV. LUTHERAN CHURCH On the Web at:
 4090 S. Melpomene Way, Tucson, AZ 85730 *GoodShepherdLutheranChurchTucson.com*
Worship Service 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School & Bible Class 10:45 a.m. Telephone (520) 721-7618
The Rev. DANIEL P. MENSING, Pastor
NOTE that Pastor Mensing is *no longer in fellowship* with our Conference.
 We are attempting at present to determine the congregation's status.

PEACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH On the Web at:
 Central Avenue at 171st Place, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913 *PeaceEvLutheran.com*
Sunday School & Bible Class 8:30 a.m.
Worship Service 10:00 a.m. Telephone: (708) 532-4288
The Rev. DAVID T. MENSING, Pastor
 17151 South Central Avenue, Oak Forest, IL 60452-4913 Pastor: (708) 532-9035
E-mail: pastormensing@yahoo.com Pastor's Cell: (708) 601-3943

ST. JOHN'S LUTHERAN CHURCH
 Sixth and Tangent Streets, Lebanon, OR 97355 Telephone: (541) 258-2941
Sunday School & Bible Class 10:00 a.m.
Worship Service 11:00 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 On the Web at:
 5350 South Fountain Street, Seattle, WA 98178 *StLukes-CLC.com*
Sunday School & Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:30 a.m. Telephone: (206) 723-1078
The Rev. EDWARD J. WORLEY, Pastor
 9658 - 54th Avenue South, Seattle, WA 98118 Pastor: (206) 723-7418
E-mail: revworley@gmail.com

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 On the Web at:
 22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411 *StMarksEvLutheran.com*
Worship Service 3:30 p.m.
Adult Bible Class 4:45 p.m. Telephone: (708) 757-6859
The Rev. DAVID J. MENSING, Pastor
 22012 Torrence Avenue, Sauk Village, IL 60411 Pastor: (708) 655-7549
E-mail: d_mensing@hotmail.com

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH On the Web at:
 300 North Ridgeland Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302 *TrinityEvLutheran.com*
Sunday School & Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Worship Service 10:15 a.m. Telephone: (708) 386-6773
The Rev. ROBERT J. LIETZ, Pastor
 233 North Cuyler Avenue, Oak Park, IL 60302 Pastor: (708) 386-4145
E-mail: robertjlietz@gmail.com

The Providential Preservation of Holy Scripture

Why is the fact that we *still today* have the *true* Word of God so vitally important? “*Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God*” (Romans 10:17). Without the Word there can be no faith; without faith, no salvation. But, thanks be to God, He has preserved to us His Word, “*the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make [us] wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus*” (II Timothy 3:15). Our salvation is sure, for “*God, that cannot lie, promised*” (Titus 1:2a). The Apostle Peter declares: “*The Word of the Lord endureth forever. And this is the word which by the [literally as] Gospel is preached unto you*” (I Peter 1:25).

— Excerpt from the *Friday Convention Sermon*, p. 99