



You are cordially invited to ...

by Shari Miller

What was the last big event observed in your life? Perhaps your list would include a graduation from high school or college, a wedding, a baby shower to welcome a new life, or a funeral to remember a life lived well.

We often call them milestones in life, don't we? Just as a milestone is an actual stone that indicates the passage of miles on a journey, so our personal and eventful milestones indicate the passage of time on this journey of life. Birth, life, and death seem to be the cycle in each of our lives.

How does this cycle of milestones change for a Christian child of God? What do we celebrate? In our Christian milestones, the Holy Spirit works in our lives through Word and Sacrament to effect true landmark celebrations.

In our Baptism, a true milestone day, God makes us His own child, washing away our sin and giving us the faith to believe in Christ as Savior. We read in Romans 6:3-4, 11(ESV): *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life ... So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.*

Each time we participate in the Lord's Supper, we celebrate the forgiveness of our sins and our new life in Christ. We celebrate together with "angels and archangels and with all the company of heaven" as we "laud and magnify" our powerful God's holy and glorious Name.* Isn't it wonderful to mark the first time you received Holy Communion as a true milestone in your life?

When we daily hear, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the Word of God, *we taste and see that the Lord is good and are blessed as we take refuge in Him* (Psalm 34:8 ESV). We are encouraged in Colossians 3:16-17 (ESV): *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.* Each new day becomes a milestone day in God's Word!

Finally, we can be secure that our funeral will not simply be a remembrance of life, but a celebration of our new life in Christ Jesus. Titus 3:4-7 (ESV): *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

Christ invites us: *Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest* (Matthew 11:28 ESV). New birth, Christian growth, death in Christ, and new life in heaven — these are the Christian milestones that God gives to His children. Rejoice and celebrate! [Q](#)

*See Proper Preface section in *Lutheran Service Book*.

btw... is the acronym for "by the Way (Jesus)." It sets the tone for the current issue.