



Reformation History #6:

Wartburg Castle by Pastor Glenn Huebel

Part of a year-long series on Reformation history and theology, from November 2016—October 2017, in commemoration of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation.

Where does one hide if he is a celebrity known by almost everyone? That was the question that Frederick the Wise had to struggle with after the Diet of Worms. His subject, Martin Luther, was now officially banned and outlawed by Church and State. Frederick did not want to brashly oppose the legal authorities by preventing an arrest, but neither did he want Luther captured and burned at the stake without a fair trial. The solution to this dilemma was to have Luther kidnapped by friendly forces and taken to a hiding place for safe-keeping. Luther and one companion were told of the plan and he reluctantly agreed to it. Frederick, by his own request, did not know where Luther was to be taken. On his way home from the Diet at Worms, Luther was surprised by a band of soldiers who stole him away from his companions near a forest outside of Eisenach, and took him to an ancient castle where he lived for nearly a year out of the public eye. He grew a beard and assumed the name Junker George, "Knight George." For a while both enemies and friends thought he might be dead.

Living in an abandoned castle can be like solitary confinement. It was a period of

great psychological and spiritual testing for Luther. He complained that he would prefer to fight the devil incarnate in evil men rather than the invisible forces of darkness. He was tormented by self-doubt and questions of the legitimacy of his work. He called this time of exile his Patmos and wilderness. But he also used this time productively to work hard. He wrote letters to his friends and tracts on controversial issues. One of his most well known and important works was accomplished in that lonely castle. He translated the New Testament into the German language. It was a superior translation which is still in use today. Through Luther's language skills and the Guttenberg Press, Germans were now able to read the Bible in their own language.

During his time at the Wartburg Castle, many dramatic changes were taking place in Wittenberg. The laymen were now seeing the practical effects of Reformation doctrine. Priests, nuns and even monks were getting married. This itself was absolutely astonishing to people, and many considered it sacrilege. The liturgy was being reformed to abolish the sacrifice of the mass and private masses for the dead. Priests were leading the service and distributing the sacrament without wearing vestments. Laymen were offered the wine and well as the bread. Radical reformers, claiming to be carrying out Luther's reformation, were beginning to incite violence, breaking windows, destroying statues, and removing all vestiges of Romanism. Luther's absence was being felt. The time had come for Luther to reappear and put his stamp on the Reformation. The 300 wilderness days were over.



Luther's room in Wartburg Castle

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That you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name. —John 20:31

Roles and Goals for the Church by Pastor Tom Chryst

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. (Eph. 4:11-16)

In this passage from Ephesians 4, Paul lays out some “roles and goals” for the Christian congregation at Ephesus. These may also serve as a model for any Christian congregation.

In light of some recent discussions about Messiah's own mission, I'd like to add some comments to the mix in the next several months. What follows will be a series of articles, based on this passage. I'll focus on these key ideas inspired by the Holy Spirit and set forth through St. Paul to the Ephesians:

- Different gifts and roles
- Unity of Faith
- Knowledge of the Son of God
- Mature Manhood
- Speaking Truth in Love
- Grow in every way

Knowledge of the Son of God

What exactly is the “knowledge of the Son of God”? Well, for starters, it's another one of the goals Paul lays out in this chapter for the church to attain. We out to seek it, and be sure to have it. Of course the “Son of God” is Jesus. But what does it mean to have knowledge of Him? What kind of knowledge are we talking about?

A popular Christian bumper sticker and billboard proclaims, “Know Jesus, Know Peace. No Jesus, No Peace.” We can agree with that as far as it goes, But what does it mean to know Jesus?

One of the lessons we teach our Catechism students under the topic of Holy Scripture is that there are three important ways in which we can know something about God.



The first of these is by reference to creation. The Psalmist puts it poetically, “The heavens declare the glory of God.” (Psalm 19:1). Or we might say that the fact that we even exist at all is evidence that there is a God. Only the fool says, in his heart, that there is no God (Psalm 14:1). So look around you, look at the wonder of creation, the beauty of a sunset, the majesty of the mountains, the intricacies of life, DNA, the human hand or eyeball – and you will see evidence, knowledge of God.

But while creation can tell us God is powerful or intelligent, or even that he appreciates good order, it does not tell us what we need to know for salvation. It also leaves big question marks about the character of God. Is he angry? Is he fickle? What does he want from me? How does he regard someone like me?



And so the second source of “knowledge of God” is the conscience. The very fact that “right and wrong” exist, and that we know them by nature – is testament to God. Scripture calls this the law that

is written on the human heart. In Romans 2:15 Paul shows that this is true even of the unbeliever: “*They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them*”. Where do these moral settings come from? Who's setting the rules, deciding what is right and wrong? And why does every human society in history roughly regard the same contours of morality (i.e. it's wrong to murder, lie, steal, and cheat)? It's because God has set these forth. Right and Wrong are themselves testament to Him.

But even the existence of our conscience doesn't bring us where we need to be with the knowledge of God. First of all, our hearts are corrupt and we can twist the law and deaden the conscience. And secondly, even if our “moral compass” was right, we don't always follow it. The conscience can't tell us of God's mercy. The conscience can't clue us in to the promise of the forgiveness. It's only an agent of the Law.

So, for true knowledge of God, and knowledge of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the human being must turn elsewhere. We need a more direct word, a more particular instruction. We need God to reveal it to us. And so he does in the Holy Scriptures. Inspired by his Spirit, these holy writings reveal to us, show us – what we couldn't know otherwise. They tell us what we could never find in study of creation or reflection on the conscience. They make clear to us God's salvation in Jesus Christ. The Scriptures teach us the knowledge of the Son of God. This is the Gospel! Here revealed is Jesus, the heart and center of the scriptures, and of our faith. Jesus, who lived perfectly to fulfill all righteousness, and died sacrificially, to cover our sins in his blood.

It is in this doctrine, revealed in Holy Scripture, that the Church finds true unity of faith. It is in the Word revealed there that we come to saving faith, and grow in love toward

(Continued on page 3)



God and neighbor. It is the Word, the external, powerful, active, living Word of God that shows us Jesus, delivers Jesus to us, and by which

the Spirit conforms us to his image. This is why God gave apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor/teachers. This is how we are built up in the body of Christ, and equipped for the work of ministry – by the revealed Word. And by that Word showing us Jesus. But “Knowledge of the Son of God” in this sense isn't primarily head-knowledge, it's heart-knowledge. This is faith talk.

And so we see the ultimate

“knowledge of the Son of God”, in these Holy Scriptures. Not that we are entirely ignorant. For indeed we have come to faith in Christ. Most of us have been instructed and examined. Some of us even know enough to teach others. But all of us can learn more, study more deeply, take to heart more fervently the knowledge of the Son of God. For we are His disciples, but only if we remain in his teaching.

We Are All Members of One Body by Deaconess Student Pamela Buhler

The members have [the same] care for one another; if one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26

Messiah is blessed to have its members care so much for Christ's Church. As long as our focus stays on Christ and Him Crucified, He will be the head of our Church. There are many opportunities at Messiah to serve and be served. We cry together, rejoice together, and serve together. Think about St. Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 12 and ponder how we show the love of Christ by being part of one body here at Messiah.

We all know our shortcomings and many of our neighbors as well. Let

us use this knowledge to complete one another in Christ. How? By keeping Christ in the center of our activities, facilitating other's shortcomings, and eliminating gossip. Forgiving one another for our mistakes and always thinking the best towards our neighbor goes a long way. Caring for our members is caring for the name of Christ, which we bear, and His Church. Luther said, “This is obvious: if anyone's foot hurts him, yes, even the little toe, the eye at once looks at it, the fingers grasp it, the face puckers, the whole body bends over to it, and all are concerned with this small member; again, once it is cared for all the other members are benefited” (*Fight, Work, Pray*). Friends, let us love one another as Christ loves us. Christ has suffered

and died for our sins, therefore let us forgive one another as He has forgiven us and build up His Church through our many talents remembering to lift one another up in prayer and partake in communion for strength. As we kneel at His altar and take the cup of our salvation, we confess we are sinful, reach for the food that sustains us, and come together in unity where We Are All Members of One Body.

Dear Lord, Help us to stay steadfast in your word, desire your sacraments, and lift our prayers up to you. Help us to comfort each other in times of need and defend one another in times of trouble. Amen.

April's Care Board: MLCA Families



This month's cards are up and available in the Fellowship Hall. For the month of April, I ask that you take a card, fill it out, and place it in the MLCA mailbox at church where it will be addressed and sent to the individual families.

The article below was published in July 2013, now that a few years have passed (and amazingly, my wife, I, and more importantly, our kids survived!) since this article was last published, so I thought it would be a good idea to re-post this article and share an update of our own personal experiences from these last couple of years in next month's newsletter!

We as parents bear the responsibility of faithfully teaching our children God's Word to help nurture the development of our children's faith. By exposing our children early to God's Words and teachings we equip them with the tools they need to grow their knowledge of the Bible and eventually grow up to be God loving responsible adults. This is why it is critically important that the child sees consistent family participation to help strengthen our bond through a common faith and understanding of our spiritual wellbeing.

I realize this may be easier said than done. As many of you know, my wife and I have 3 children under the age of 4, and we can certainly relate to the difficulty and stress that comes with worshipping with young children. We know about that feeling you get when it seems that everyone's eyes are upon you when your child feels compelled to scream as loud as they can during worship service... Perhaps in the frustration of it all, you may even ask yourself "Is it even worth coming to church with my kids??" Remember what Jesus said to his apostles when they got annoyed with all the children present: "Let the children come to me and do not hinder them. For the Kingdom of heaven is theirs!" (Matthew 19:14)

It is important to know that even when we are overcome with that hopeless feeling when our children misbehave, we must remember that there are also many instances of affirmation, it may not be perfect, but we should be encouraged by progress. Even in the midst of the cries, whines, giggles and the crinkling bag of chips, you may be able to hear the "joyful noise" of a child who loudly announces that they colored the cross the same color as the cross in the sanctuary, perhaps the beautiful voice of the

little girl we have all wondered and asked about who sings along with the rest of the congregation, maybe a child who proudly and loudly sounds out the words in the hymnals or maybe the sound of a young child proudly reciting "The Lord's Prayer" in unison. These are signs that progress is being made and I can assure you that we are not alone and we too can look forward to our child also participating in a similar way and sharing that moment of pride just as those parents have done before us.

Even on weeks when our own children struggle to behave themselves, we must take comfort that someone else's child is learning. If we are able to remain faithful with regular family worship, I have faith that with a lot of patience, prayers and some really really deep cleansing breaths that worshipping with our entire family will become easier and in turn our pews will be filled with even more children whom have also learned to appreciate to take joy in the privilege of being in the Lord's house. We can then revisit the, "Is it even worth it?" question and I am hopeful that we will share the feeling of pride and relief and come to the realization that this is a relatively small sacrifice that will prove to be a very worthwhile cause...

As you know, many of us learn by repetition and predictability so I invite our members with children to develop and follow a ritual of predictability with their entire families on Sundays. Experts say that a primary reason for following rituals is that it helps our younger children understand that there is something very important going on. Rituals communicate that what's being done is out of the ordinary and is therefore, worthy of a special ceremony. Rituals also create an environment of predictability. For

our younger children, even the opportunity to regularly participate in prayer by folding their hands is a powerful point of entry into liturgy of the Church. For others, the presence of familiar hymns and responses sung by the congregation are an excellent opportunity for children to participate.

In closing, children learn from watching their parents participate in worship. It is us who influences our child's life so it is important that we play an active role in our children's education. Children learn best when God's Word is an important part of daily life at home as well as at our church. So the next time you struggle with your child, keep in mind that behind that screeching "joyful noise", our children possess an intelligence that we as adults take for granted. They certainly absorb more than we think, so our challenge is to form good habits as early as possible so that as our influence in our children wanes, their participation will remain strong and continue for many years to come. To those parents with young children, I know it's difficult, but I thank you for bringing your child to church. Your family with all its noise, screaming, struggles, commotion and/or joy is not simply tolerated, you are a vital part of our organization and we look forward to continuing to worship with you and your joyful little noises!



COME FOR SOME OLD-FASHIONED FUN!

**MLCA'S BOOT-SCOOTIN'
FAMILY BBQ &
AUCTION FUNDRAISER**

SATURDAY, APRIL 29

3:00 - 7:00 P.M.

Tickets:

Adult Plates: \$25

Kid Plates:

\$15 with wristband *

\$10 without wristband

*** Wristbands are for participation
in the carnival games and hayride**

**Purchase online at
mlcatexas.org
or in the school
office.**



Worship Schedule for Holy Week and Easter



Palm Sunday, April 9,	8:00 am,	Congregational Processional (beginning outside)
	10:45 am,	Children's Processional (meet in the Reception room at 10:30am)
Maundy Thursday, April 13,	6:00 pm,	Seder Meal with Communion—sign up with the church office by April 2.
Good Friday, April 14,	7:30 pm,	Service of Darkness (<i>Tenebrae</i>)
Saturday, April 15,	8:00 am,	Prayer Vigil begins (8:00am—7:00pm)
	7:00 pm,	Service of Confession and Absolution
Easter Sunday, April 16,	7:00 am,	Easter Sunrise Service with Communion
	8:15 am,	Easter Breakfast (Freewill offering)
	9:00 am,	Easter Egg Hung
	9:30 am,	Sunday School
	10:45 am,	Easter Worship

Holy Saturday Prayer Vigil—Sign Up!

We will observe Holy Saturday, April 15, with an all-day Prayer Vigil beginning at 8:00am and ending at 7:00pm. We hope to have at least one person praying in our sanctuary

at every moment during these hours. To participate you may sign up for a particular time slot during the day. The sign-up sheet is posted on the copy room door. Please join us for

this significant event. *We have so much to pray about and for!* The day concludes with a Service of Confession and Absolution in the sanctuary at 7:00pm.

Summer Chess Camp 2017



- Open to students entering 3rd—12th grades in the fall of 2017.
- Meets at MLCA, Monday—Friday, July 10—14, from 1:00pm—4:00pm
- Cost is \$25 per participant

Individualized and group instruction will include: Basic Rules, Basic Checkmate Patterns, Tactics, Strategy, Openings, Middlegame, Endgame, Grandmaster Videos, and more!

The Friday session will conclude with a 6 round championship tournament, with trophies for top finishers.

All participants will receive Knight or Rook certificate in recognition of course completion, as well as a chess book and a T-shirt.

Our main instructor is Rev. Tom Chryst, who ranks in the top 5% of rated Texas tournament players. He has over 20 years experience playing and coaching young people in the "Game of Kings."

Online registration is now open! Go to the blog on the MLCA website, www.mlcatexas.org, to find all the information you will need to register and pay.

For more information, contact Pastor Chryst at tomchryst@yahoo.com

April Youth Happenings



Hosted by the Pinero Family

Youth 6th -12th Grade

Sunday, **April 9 & May 21**, after the late service

Lunch will be provided by the Pinero Family



Bass Hall Opera: *Carmen*

Date: Thursday, April 20, 2017

Time: 6:45 pm

Price: \$5 for Opera, \$5 for Cheesecake

It's that time of year again, high school youth! See Pamela Buhler to purchase your ticket. We will again head to Cheesecake Factory after opera to discuss our favorite parts and enjoy some delicious cheesecake.

English Country Spring Dance

On Saturday, **April 22rd**, Messiah will be hosting their spring dance from 6:00pm-11:00pm in the Fellowship Hall. This event is geared towards high school youth but is a family event, so parents and children of all ages are welcome. Cost \$20 each, \$60 max per family; food included.

No RSVP necessary.



2016 Summer Youth Attendees



Christ Academy & Phoebe Academy

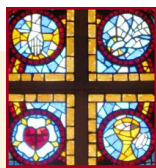
Registration is now open for summer 2017. Any confirmed high school aged youth who is interested in attending needs to fill out and return registration forms to Pamela Buhler by May 7th.

Messiah fundraising funds will pick up the tuition portion of the expenses and families are responsible for transportation cost.

Boys: June 18th - July 1st; tuition \$600/\$400 returning

Girls: June 18th-25th; tuition \$400

A BREAKFAST FUNDRAISER will be held on May 21, during Sunday School



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Academy Office: (817) 431-5486

Sunday Worship: 8:00 a.m. & 10:45 a.m.

Sunday School & Adult Bible Class: 9:30 a.m.

Rev. Glenn Huebel, Senior Pastor

Rev. Thomas Chryst, Associate Pastor

www.messiahkeller.org

Miscellany (/ˈmɪsəˌlānē/) noun. —a mixture or collection of different things

From Sarah:

Teensgotcents is a blog written for teens, by teens. The articles address things like money management, and current issues in our culture. More importantly though, they talk about Lutheran teens' walks with God.

Teensgotcents is partnered with LCEF. It is a very good experience, and I am thrilled to be a part of it. I am on a team with four other girls who all love writing as much as I do.

Please check out our website, and read and comment on our articles. It would be very much appreciated!

Thank you!
Sarah Tonniges

Summer Chess Camp

July 10—14, from 1:00-4:00pm, with our own Pastor Chryst. See page 6 for more information, and go to the blog page at mlcatexas.org to register!



Art Camp, June 26—30. The morning session for 6—9 year olds is full, however, please let Marcia Huebel know if you are interested in case a spot opens up. **There are four open slots** in the afternoon session for 10-13 year olds. The cost is \$125, all supplies included. If your child will be turning 10 in the fall, he/she is welcome to attend this session. Marcia.huebel@mlcatexas.org

LCEF World Changers

Last fall, Sarah Tonniges applied and was selected to participate in an internship in partnership with the LCEF and their World Changers blog, working with Eva Baker of Teensgotcents. Here is the article introducing Sarah and the other interns: <https://lcef.org/introducing-team-world-changers>, a link to Sarah's first post: <https://lcef.org/stop-cash-burning-hole/> and her latest: <https://lcef.org/win-your-new-years-resolution/>.



Thank you! The library received \$246 from the Schwan's fundraiser for new books. Thank you to everyone who participated!

Pregnancy Help 4 U

This wonderful ministry's annual fundraising banquet will be held on April 20 at the Texas Motor Speedway Club, from 7-9pm. Tickets are almost gone! We would like to fill a table of Messiah members. If you are interested in attending, please contact Pastor Huebel or the church office at carol.hibbs@messiahkeller.org.

A Trivia Night Thank You!

Thank you everyone for the wonderful memories at our Spaghetti Dinner Trivia Night. We appreciate your donations to supporting our youth summer trips. A big thank you to Thrivent for supporting this event; food and awards were purchased through their generosity. I believe everyone had a wonderful time enjoying themselves. Pastor Chryst's team won again this year. We will have to be more strategic next year to challenge this team! Let's do it!

