



Suffering for Righteousness' Sake

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

The recent video exposé of the profit-by-butchery business promoted by Planned Parenthood was morally repugnant. A Houston Grand Jury's decision not to prosecute this evil was a sad reflection on our nation's state of conscience. The decision of that same Grand Jury to indict the man who exposed Planned Parenthood's evil (for a fake California Driver's License) is beyond comprehension. We have now reached the level of moral bankruptcy described by the Prophet Isaiah: *Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!* (Isaiah 5:20). The same people who can wink at or overlook brutal violence, greed, and injustice, are outraged by a fake Driver's License used to seek access in investigation of a wrongdoing? The Editorial Board of the Ft Worth Star-Telegram recently crowed about the turnaround of this case, saying, "Regardless of its success, the Center for Medical Progress (the organization that conducted the sting) should be seen as an unprincipled actor now laid bare by a grand jury's action" (*Anti-abortion Activists Made Their Point*, January 27, 2016). Let me get this straight – laying bare the practice of butchering babies and selling their organs is "unprincipled," but laying bare the questionable ethics of faking a Driver's License to conduct a sting operation is good? I would love to have had a camera in the room when this opinion was approved by the Star-Telegram Editorial Board. Did they pass it with a straight face, knowing that the editorial never even mentions the fact that the DA prosecuting this case received

\$25,000 in campaign funds from the lawyer of a late-term abortionist, the same one that an earlier Grand Jury under her direction failed to indict? Or that an assistant DA in her office has been a member of the board of directors for the Planned Parenthood affiliate featured in the videos since 2013, and a fund-raiser for them since 2009? If one seriously wishes to challenge the ethical standards of journalism in our country, there are much bigger fish to fry. This moral blindness combined with Draconian self-righteousness is shameful.

It is painfully clear that the legal system is no longer blind, judging citizens only by the objective law. The law is becoming just another political tool to accomplish social ends. One of those ends is the silencing of the Christian voice by any means necessary. We have seen businesses destroyed by exceedingly harsh financial judgments, not for money-laundering, tax-evasion or illegal trafficking of banned substances, but for simply refusing to participate in activities contrary to the Christian conscience, i.e., for being politically incorrect. We have seen proprietors of such businesses scolded by judges, and even required to take re-education classes to correct their intolerable opinions. It appears that the ONLY thing our society can no longer tolerate is the Christian voice.

Though this is certainly a new experience for us, it should not be surprising. St. Peter wrote to the Christians of the first century: "*Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you*" (1 Peter 4:12). Most of us have lived in a very unusual period and place in history and have become rather "soft" in our ability to bear wrong. What we are seeing now is really more of the norm described in Scripture. Christians in Biblical days were well instructed about the probability of suffering as Christians and how to respond to injustice. We are instructed to live honorably among unbelievers, showing ourselves to be faithful, responsible and

(Continued on page 2)



Inside this issue:

Lenten Schedule	2
Latin for Lutherans	3
Miscellany	4
Youth and Young Adults	5
Missionary McDermott Newsletter	6

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

loving neighbors and citizens (1 Peter 2:12). Though some fanatics in the name of Christ may, on rare occasions, commit violent acts out of "righteous indignation," the Christian Church universally and strongly condemns such actions. If we Christians do wrong, we should not glory or boast in suffering legal repercussions (1 Peter 4:15), nor should we ever defend evil acts, whatever their motive may be. We do not follow the principle that the end justifies the means.

Christians are reminded that the government has been established by God to punish evildoers and to reward those who live morally. When we live lives in accordance with the Ten Commandments we have a reasonable expectation that the government will at least leave us alone, but we know that this will not always be the case. The institution of government has often been high-jacked by Satan and turned against believers and Christ's mission to preach the Gospel and administer

the sacraments. The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was founded by Christians who were fleeing such a misuse of governmental power in Germany. When Christians suffer for doing good, including the good of speaking the truth of law and gospel, we are to glory in such suffering. Jesus Himself speaks of such suffering as a blessing and a privilege. He says, "*Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you*" (Matt. 5:11-12). The Apostles interpreted these words literally, for we read in the Book of Acts: "*when they had called in the apostles, they beat them and charged them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. Then they left the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name*" (Acts 5:40-41).

As we enter the season of Lent we see the example of the One who suffered for righteousness' sake. St Peter reminds us that the just one suffered for (in the place of) the unjust. He suffered the very curse we have earned by our sins. Jesus willingly and patiently accepted our punishment and bore our iniquity without responding in anger, hatred, or wrath. He returned good for evil. Through His innocent suffering and death we are saved, delivered from the wrath of God. Through our faith in the sufferings and death of Jesus we have both the power and the example of facing unjust suffering in our Christian life. It may be given to some of us to suffer in His Name (Phil. 1:29). If and when that happens, we know that our sufferings are not in vain, for He will bring glory to His Name through our weakness and our meekness. Let us continue to encourage one another to "make best use of the time because the days are evil" (Eph. 5:16), and if God wills us to suffer as Christians to do so patiently in the hope of glory.



February 10, 2016

**Divine Service with
Holy Communion
and the
Imposition of Ashes
7:00 p.m.**

Praying through the Passion of Christ

Join us at 7:00 during the
season of Lent
for Vespers.

Each week's reading from the
passion according to St. Luke
will be framed in a petition of
the Lord's Prayer.



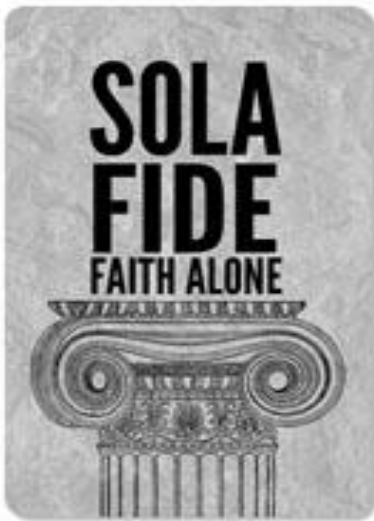
Lenten suppers will be offered every Wednesday evening at 6:00 p.m., for a free-will offering. Various groups in the congregation are sponsoring these suppers as a service to our worshippers and as fund-raising events for their ministries.

A Brief Latin Glossary for the Lutheran Armchair Theologian — by Pastor Tom Chryst

Lex semper accusat
Lex orandi, lex credendi
Simul justus et peccator
Ex nihilo
Sola scriptura
Sola gratia
Sola fide
Fides qua, fides quae
Ex opere operato
Quia and quatenus
Oratio, meditatio, tentatio
Soli deo gloria

“Sola fide”

“Faith Alone” - We hold, with St. Paul, that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law. (Romans 3:28).



In the Reformation

Like it's sisters “Grace Alone” and “Scripture Alone”, this great “Sola” of the reformation serves to sum up one of the most important and yet often confused teaching of Scripture. It was a particular point of contention at the time of the Reformation, and still separates us.

In the 1540s, right in the thick of the Reformation, Rome convened the “Council of Trent”, which was its official response to the reformers’ teachings. Needless to say, Rome was “not a fan” of “Sola Fide”:

“If any one saith, that man is truly

absolved from his sins and justified, because that he assuredly believed himself absolved and justified; or, that no one is truly justified but he who believes himself justified; and that, by this faith alone, absolution and justification are effected; let him be anathema (excommunicated).”
(From the Council of Trent, Canon XIV on justification)

And even though some more liberal Lutherans and some elements of Rome have declared various forms of unity in recent years, the condemnations of Trent have never been revoked. We still teach, as Scripture teaches, that salvation is by faith alone. And Rome still denies this.

Vs. Works

The main contrast implicit in the little phrase, “Sola Fide” is between salvation by faith and salvation by good works. There were, and probably always will be, those in the Christian church who confuse this matter or refuse to see the important distinction. Good works, for the Christian, are a fruit of faith. They are the cart that follows the horse of faith. They are the effect of faith, not the cause of salvation.

Some have taught Pelagianism – that all on our own we can choose God and do good works toward our salvation. This also denies original sin and its disastrous effects on mankind. Thankfully, even before the Reformation the church fully rejected this as heresy.

But others came along with a more subtle false teaching: Semi-Pelagianism. This is a sort of compromise position, which holds that God saves us in some way, but that we also in our way participate in salvation (via good works). In other words, man can cooperate with God. God must take the initiative, but then you have to do your part. But Semi-Pelagianism fails the same Biblical test as its forerunner Pelagianism. No one can work his own salvation,

in whole or in part. Christ has done it all.

“Sola Fide” stands, then, as a hedge against all those who would say or teach that we can contribute any good works to our salvation. We are saved, quite simply, by faith alone.

But Faith is Never Alone

This is not to say that Lutherans despise good works, or don't believe in them. As Augsburg Confession XX states, “*Our teachers are falsely accused of forbidding good works.*” But we are clear in this: Good works do nothing to save us. We can contribute nothing to our salvation. It is a pure and free gift of God, done only by him in Christ, and only to be received passively by us – that is, believed.

But even one of the chief passages that teaches salvation by grace through faith alone, also drives us in the very next verse to good works:

⁸ *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹not a result of works, so that no one may boast.* (Ephesians 2:8-9)

And now verse 10:

¹⁰ *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.*

This shows us that even though faith saves us – God still has good works already prepared for us to do. Faith alone saves, but faith is never alone – it is active, moving us to greater love and service to our neighbor. And this is all part of God's plan for us! He's prepared these good works in advance.

Even this is a comfort to us. It's not up to us to wonder and worry about which good works we ought to do or

(Continued on page 4)

A Brief Latin Glossary, cont.

must do to be saved. Rather, we trust that God will give us the opportunities to serve as we are able, according to where he's placed us – and this not to BE saved, but because in Christ we ARE saved.



A Doctrine of Comfort

“Sola Fide” is one of the most comforting teachings of Scripture. For in knowing that I am saved by faith alone, I can rest assured that my salvation is secure. If, rather, I

believed that my works are what count (in whole or in part), then when do I know that I've done enough? How do I know my works pass muster? For, I often do them with impure motivations and for selfish gain. Can anyone ever truly trust in his own works? No. God's standard is perfect. We are far from it.

But faith looks to Christ for all good. Faith trusts in his blood shed at the cross. Faith trusts that his good works are credited to me. His good work on our behalf IS perfect. His perfect sacrifice covers all sin.

But Is MY Faith Enough?

From time to time Christians wonder whether they have faith, or if their faith is strong enough. “Does my faith “count” for righteousness, since I have all these doubts and

struggles?” “Certainly I don't believe as I should, like all those other good Christians. I must be a fraud. I can't fool God.”

But here's the thing about faith: It looks outside of itself. It looks to its object, the cross of Christ. The blood of Jesus. The promises of God. All of God's good gifts and words for us.

So yes, faith is enough, but faith doesn't point you to your faith. It points you to Jesus. To the Christian who struggles and wonders if his faith is strong enough – we point him to Jesus. To the believer who prays, “Lord, I believe, help my unbelief”, we say “you're in good company”. All of us sinners with imperfect faith that strain to qualify as mustard seeds – are saved by faith in Christ, not faith in faith. And Christ will never fail you.

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

Thanks to our Thrivent members who chose us to be the recipient of their **Thrivent Choice** dollars, Messiah Lutheran Church received \$1296.00 in 2015!

It's not too late to sign up for the **Pastor's Class!** This 15 session course covers the teachings of the Bible as confessed by the Lutheran Church. It is a prerequisite for membership in the Lutheran Church, but anyone is welcome to attend. It is a great refresher course. If you or someone you know might be interested in joining the class, please

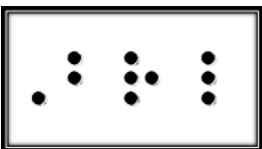
see Pastor Huebel or email carol.hibbs@messiahkerller.org.

New in the Library: a series of theological books published by The Luther Academy, edited by David Scaer, Jon Stephenson, and the late Robert Preus and Kurt Marquart. Topics include Baptism, The Lord's Supper, Christology and Eschatology. Find them in the 230 section on the back wall. For our younger readers, check out Mo Willem's “Elephant and Piggie” books, located in the ER section. If you haven't yet read these to your

kids, you are in for a treat. Lower elementary readers by enjoy the series of “Larry Boy” chapter books from VeggieTales. Almost 100 books and CDs have been cataloged since last month. Come up to the library and check a few out!

We have new Board Chairman, and they may be calling you to help! Please prayerfully consider how you can be of service to the Gospel here at Messiah. If everyone does something, no one has to do everything.

Braille Center News



Those aren't pips or dabs, that picture spells “Braille” in the English Braille language. This last month, the Braille Center in the MAC completed another order for Ezekiel in the Swahili

language. Thank you to the 36 attendees across 4 events for another successful set of books for Africa. Would you like to see what this is about? Contact Barbara Piñero.

Youth News



Valentine Dinner Youth Fundraiser

Join the Youth on Saturday, February 13 at 6:00 p.m. for a semi-formal Valentine Dinner in the Parish Hall. The main course is planned as Olive Garden lasagna, with salad and bread sticks; bring your own special beverage, if you choose. Jonathan Brewer will be entertaining the adults on the piano and Lori Hicks will be entertaining your children separately, at no additional charge. Suggested

donation is \$20 per person, accepted at the door. There will also be special dessert platters for \$5. Please RSVP with Daniel Sweet at 817-454-7057.

This fundraiser will support Messiah Lutheran's Youth Group (WAY) as they travel in July to the national Higher Things Lutheran Youth Conference. We look forward to your support and an enjoyable evening together.

What is WAY and what is Higher Things?

Messiah Lutheran Youth Group has an acronym WAY that stands for Willing Active Youth. Higher Things is a Recognized Service Organization in the LCMS whose mission is "to assist parents, congregations, and pastors in cultivating, encouraging and promoting a distinctively Lutheran identity among their youth and young adults," (HigherThings.org).

This year the Youth Trip will travel to Colorado for the "Bread of Life" Lutheran Youth conference. Jesus' words from John 6 "I am the Bread of Life" will be taught through

lectures, liturgy, hymns and catechesis in the fellowship of other LCMS congregations and youth. This is a great opportunity for our Youth Group to meet more Lutherans in a unique and rigorous 4 day setting in July.

If you have any questions about this Youth Trip, please contact Pastor Chryst or Daniel Sweet. Thank you for your consideration and support.



Messiah Young Adults

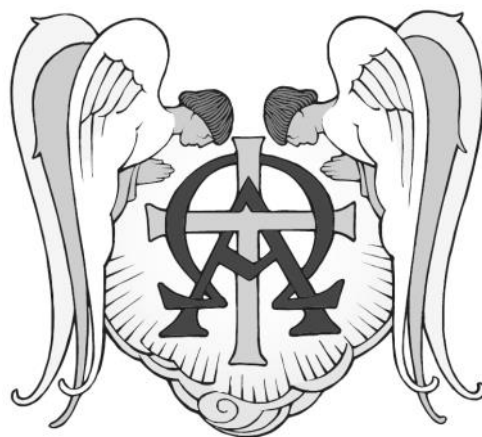


In January 2016, the Young Adult Group continued a bible study through Exodus. In Chapter 17 we learned how the striking of the rock in Horeb symbolizes the striking of Jesus, our rock. From the side of our stricken, crucified Christ flowed blood and water, reminding us again of our baptismal water. Every day we require water to sustain our physical life; every day we should be reminded of God's gift through His water to sustain our eternal life. Join the Young Adult Group down the hill in the MAC on Mondays at 7PM. Contact: Daniel 817-454-7057

Messiah VBS 2016

Vacation Bible School dates are set for June 27 through June 30, mark it on your calendar. More details to come with fundraiser events. Contacts for Registration: Tamarra Liddle and Elizabeth Johnson, Volunteers: Stephanie Cholak and Daniel Sweet.

VBS 2016 Supply Idea:
Do you receive the Sunday newspaper? Please donate your coupon insert pack for us to clip. Contact Daniel at 817-454-7057.



SERVING THE LORD IN GHANA

NEWS FROM THE MCDERMOTT FAMILY



February 2016

Mcdermottsinghana.wordpress.com



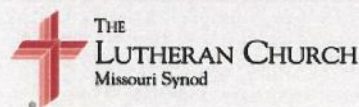
DID YOU KNOW?

Some common phrases in Akan Twi, the most common language in Ghana:

- *Woho te sen?* – How are you doing?
- *Eye* - Fine
- *Wo din de sen?* - What is your name?
- *Me din de ...* - My name is ...
- *Medase* – Thank you
- *Akwaba!* – Welcome!

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Preach/Present at Grace, Burkburnett, TX – 7 Feb
- Preach/Present at Grace, Arlington, TX – 14 Feb
- Preach/Present at Messiah, Keller, TX – 21 Feb
- Preach/Present at Our Redeemer, Dallas – 28 Feb



To be added to or removed from this mailing list, send an email message to ryan.mcdermott@lcmsintl.org with the word ADD or REMOVE in the subject line.

“Do not be dismayed by them”



The Lutheran seminary in Accra

But you, dress yourself for work; arise, and say to them everything that I command you. Do not be dismayed by them, lest I dismay you before them. And I, behold, I make you this day a fortified city, an iron pillar, and bronze walls, against the whole land, against the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests, and the people of the land. They will fight against you, but they shall not prevail against you, for I am with you, declares the LORD, to deliver you.” (Jeremiah 1:17-19 ESV)

Jeremiah was good at finding excuses for why he could not fulfill the Lord's commission. He was too young, people did not like him, they threw him in jail, and so on and so forth.

But the Lord clapped His hand over Jeremiah's mouth and told him to, as we might say, “shut up and get to

work.” No excuses, no embarrassment – just get up, get dressed, and get with the program.

Sometimes this is a difficult pill to swallow. Recently, Burkina Faso – the country just north of Ghana – has been rocked by violence and unrest. Our new area director and his wife had been planning to locate there, but now plans are being re-evaluated. It has the whole region on alert.

But the Lord says, “I am with you, declares the LORD, to deliver you.” That is His promise. No matter what happens in the world, nothing can change that. Nothing can separate us from Christ, or from the Body of Christ.

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. “E'en so, Lord Jesus, quickly come!”



PLEASE PRAY FOR:

- Continued support for our work, so that we keep progressing toward "green light" status
- The families affected by the recent violence in Burkina Faso, especially those who mourn their dead
- Skill and diligence in our studies and preparation

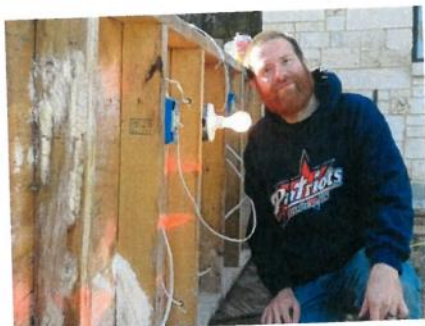
GIVE THANKS FOR:

- The new friends and acquaintances we are meeting here
- The work that the people of God are carrying out in His Name throughout the world
- Our missionaries serving in West Africa and elsewhere

PRAISE GOD FOR:

- The many congregations and individuals who pray for us, encourage and support us
- The new Together In Mission congregations who have joined our network recently

Bush Electronics, and more



Ryan helped wire a 3-way circuit!

We are well underway with our first session of classes here at GIAL. Cultural Anthropology is quite an interesting class. We have been learning about different theories of culture and society, and different ways that societies describe kinship relationships. Did you know that in traditional Hawai'ian culture, all relatives in the same generation are called the same? That means that all your uncles are "father" and all your aunts are "mother".

We have also been working on a field-work assignment, which involves visiting and describing a new cultural context. Fortunately for us, there is a Baptist church nearby whose members are mostly immigrants from Ghana and other parts of West Africa. They have been very gracious and helpful in assisting us with our assignment so far!

Bush Mechanics and Electronics

Over the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday weekend, Ryan took a course called Bush Mechanics and Electronics. During the weekend, he learned how to design and build a solar-power system, how to solder wiring components, how to build a solar cooker, how to service a small gas engine, and more.

It was an interesting course, and Ryan learned a lot of things that will be useful out on the mission field, as well as just around the house, if/when we have a house in the US again.

Special thanks to Emily's father, Scott Olson, for teaching me so much over the years. I felt much more confident having that background knowledge.



Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the Word of the Lord may speed ahead and be honored, as happened among you. – 2 Thessalonians 3:1

- The McDermott Family

Ryan	Emily
Rhys	Evangeline
Joshua	Kaj



There are many opportunities to serve as short-term or GEO missionaries. Check out the current list and download an application at lcms.org/service. Click on "Service Opportunities."

To support the LCMS through the work of Rev. & Mrs. Ryan McDermott, you may send a tax-deductible gift to:

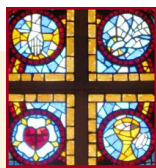
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

Mission Central
40718 Hwy E16
Mapleton, IA 51034

Make checks payable to The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Mark checks "Support of McDermotts - Ghana." Gifts can also be given securely online through the LCMS website, on my online giving page at lcms.org/mcdermott.

888-THE LCMS • lcms.org • infocenter@lcms.org | 2

OR



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

Rev. Steven Cholak, Assistant Pastor

Mrs. Erika Mildred, MLCA Headmaster

www.messiahkeller.org

Lutheran Schools Week at MLCA

"Life Together in Christ" is the LCMS theme for 2016's National Lutheran Schools Week, and we at MLCA have been celebrating that life together. National Lutheran Schools Week provides our network of nearly 2,300 LCMS pre-schools, elementary schools and high schools with the public opportunity to proclaim and celebrate God's work among us in Lutheran schools. We thank God for the opportunity to provide excellent academic preparation for the children

we serve. We are most

grateful for the opportunity to share Jesus' amazing love with children and their families. National Lutheran Schools Week gives us an opportunity to proclaim these great blessings within the communities we serve. Our schools are amazing incubators for faithful witness of God's love for us through Christ by teachers and students alike.

Our 7th – 9th graders started our week on a great note by blessing our 8 a.m. service with several pieces on hand bells. On Monday, we rolled up our pants to show off our crazy socks. We also rolled up our sleeves to load a pick-

up truck full of canned goods for the Community Storehouse in Keller. The Community Storehouse and Swaddling Clothes have been our two mission projects for our chapel offerings all year, and it was a great experience to have our scholars help load the food.

Tuesday was "We LOVE Texas" day, and scholars and teachers alike showed off their hats, denim, and boots. We also had a morning assembly for the entire school to watch 9-time gold medalist Josh Horton perform his incredible juggling skills. On Wednesday, "Lion's Pride" day, we wore our plaid with pride, and our 5th – 9th graders traveled to Faith Lutheran School in Plano to hold our 2nd annual Messiah-Faith Latin Day. This year's Latin festivities focused on the culture and history of the Ancient Romans and included gladiator games, Latin music, Latin jeopardy, and a scene from an Ancient Roman play, The Menaechmi, written by Plautus. This Roman comedy was the inspiration for Shakespeare's Comedy of Errors, a play many of our Logic and Rhetoric scholars had read.

Thursday's hallways were filled with future doctors, lawyers, farmers, and more, as we celebrated "When I Grow Up..." day. Friday was Spirit Day – MLCA t-shirts, jeans, and classroom treats. It was a great school week, and our celebrations of NLSW 2016 finished on Sunday with our K – 1st Grade Choir and our 2nd – 6th Grade Choir singing at the 10:45 service at Messiah.

Life together at MLCA is always special, but our celebrations this week as a part of National Lutheran Schools Week created some wonderful memories and amazing times in our school.

