



Does the Resurrection of Jesus Make a Difference Today? by Pastor Glenn Huebel

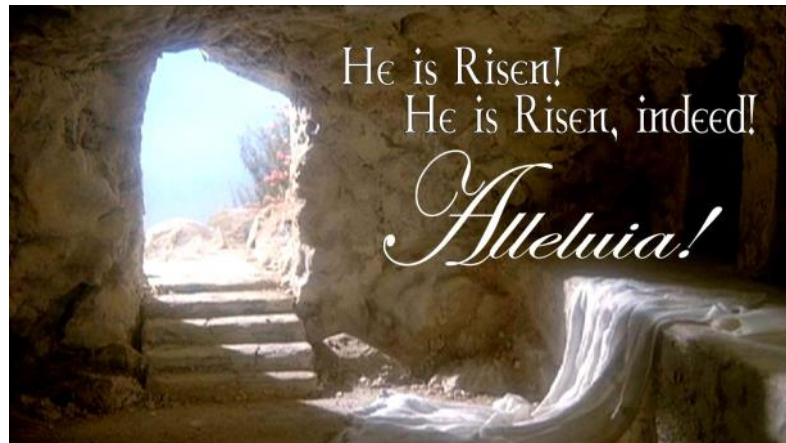
The resurrection of Jesus is a doctrine that the Christian Church has proclaimed and defended for many centuries. Despite the secularization of our culture, Easter is still a fairly popular holiday in America, but how many of those who made their annual trek to church on Easter Sunday really believe that Jesus rose from the dead? And does it really matter today? Mainline church liberals have long discounted the resurrection as an historical fact, but they often piously concede that the "story" is a good and necessary element of the Christian religion. Is that really so bad? Does it make a difference today whether Jesus really rose from the dead so long as the myth remains part of our culture?

There is obviously a huge difference between honoring an ancient "resurrection myth" with its liturgical pageantry, and believing that Jesus actually rose from the dead. Everything in Christianity is ultimately anchored to the resurrection of our Lord. If the resurrection happened, Christianity is true. If it did not, Christianity is a lie ("myth" is just a euphemism for lie). St Paul himself acknowledged this quite plainly (1 Cor. 15:17).

If one is compelled by the resurrection of Jesus to recognize His teachings as heavenly truth (and how could someone confessing the resurrection escape such a conclusion?), then the resurrection leads us

to bow to Jesus as the eternal Son of God coequal with the Father, for that is what Jesus taught. The resurrection leads us to confess that Jesus' death was offered as a ransom payment to set the world free, for that is what Jesus taught. The resurrection leads us to bow to the authority of the Scriptures, for that is what Jesus taught. The resurrection leads us to the certainty of the forgiveness of our sins, and the certainty of the hope of our own resurrection to come, for that is what Jesus taught. If the resurrection leads one to believe such marvelous things, it makes an astounding difference in one's life. A person who believes such things is translated from death to life, from darkness to light, and from hopelessness to a living and unquenchable hope. The resurrection changes EVERYTHING.

But how does one know that the resurrection of Jesus actually happened? After all, we haven't seen the risen Lord as the Apostles did. We have not put our fingers into the nail marks in His hands, or our hand into the spear wound in His side like Thomas did. We are wholly dependent upon the word of the Apostles who claim to have seen Him, touched Him, heard Him, and eaten with Him after His resurrection. I suppose people may argue that the Apostles just made up the stories of the resurrection, but that would defy reason. People lie all the time, of course, but usually they have a strong motive to do so. A crooked salesman may lie in order to make money. A witness to a crime may lie to avoid the threat of harm to himself, or to inflict harm on an enemy. A law-breaker may lie to avoid punishment. A person may lie to protect a friend or relative from punishment. People do not usually lie for no reason. They certainly do



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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

not lie in order to make their situation worse. The confession that Jesus rose from the dead did not materially or temporally benefit the Apostles in any way. In fact, this confession was the primary cause of the great afflictions that marked all of their lives. These afflictions included beatings, stoning, imprisonment, confiscation of property, and martyrdom, often horribly administered. They could have avoided these afflictions by simply remaining silent on the resurrection of Jesus. So why would they lie about it? The circumstances would have compelled them to verify the truth of the resurrection in every way possible – which is exactly what happened. It is highly improbable that the Apostles made up the story or fostered the deception of a resurrection.

Someone might argue that the sincerity of the Apostles' belief in the resurrection is not in itself convincing proof that the resurrection occurred. People are often led to sincerely believe false things. Let us remember, however, that the

Apostolic testimony includes visible witness of the risen Christ on several different occasions. During these meetings, they touched the body of Jesus and watched Him eat because they thought they might be seeing a phantom. If one concedes that the Apostles had no motive to lie, how would one explain these occurrences apart from the resurrection of Jesus? Some have suggested that the Apostles were hallucinating, but none of their testimonies supports such a theory. On top of all this is the fact that the body of Jesus could not be produced. The tomb must have been empty on Sunday morning because the enemies would certainly have refuted the proclamation of the resurrection if the body was still there. The official explanation for the missing body was theft. They paid the Roman soldiers to say that the disciples stole the body. But that brings us back to the integrity of the Apostolic witness. If they had stolen the body, they were knowingly promoting a falsehood. They had no motive to do that, and every motive NOT to do that.

The resurrection of Jesus is ultimately an article of faith based upon the Word of God. The Lord calls us blessed who believe it on the basis of the Word alone (John 20:29). Though the Holy Spirit has worked in our hearts a faith in the resurrection that does not rest on seeing and touching the body of Jesus, we are comforted to know that God did not leave us without clear and convincing historical proof that the tomb was empty and that Jesus rose from the dead. In the sure confidence that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God who redeemed us from sin, death, and devil, we can courageously and peacefully face every challenge we meet in this vale of tears, boldly scorn the devil and the grave, and live daily in the hope of our resurrection to eternal glory. Does the resurrection of Jesus make a difference today? Nothing could ever make a greater difference in the history of the world. JESUS IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN, INDEED! ALLELUIA!

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

Book Fair: MLCA is hosting a Book Fair by Usborne Books from May 9—13. Members and students can purchase books during the day or while attending *A Night at the Academy* on May 13. Watch the bulletin for more information.

Library Volunteers are needed: We need someone to cover books and get them ready for cataloging. Some of this can be done in your home, at your convenience. We also need volunteers to “shelf-read”, or go through each shelf to make sure the books are all in the same place. If you like order, this is the job for you! Please see Marcia Huebel if you would like to help in the library.

Church Garage Sale: The garage sale has been postponed to May 14. Contact Barbara Brewer 817-897-4460 and Carolyn Harris 817-891-1269 for more information.

Sunday School: The school year is winding down, and that means that the call for Summer Sunday School Teachers will soon be going out. If you want to beat the rush, reserve your spot with Meredith Sifford now!

For Men Only: If you were in Pastor Huebel's Sunday School class a few weeks ago, you heard the topic of gender roles in the light

of God's Word. We talked about the vital importance of men serving as spiritual leaders in the home and the church. In light of that, we have an opportunity for our men, and confirmed young men, to serve as leaders, **without the need for a hours of training or time on the job!** What could that be? Serving as an USHER on Sunday morning!!!! This job truly does not take much of your valuable time (you're here anyway, right?!) but it is a very important task. Good ushers make everything run more smoothly on Sunday morning! We have a lot of good, solid men in this congregation. We shouldn't ever have a shortage of ushers...and, yet we do. Please consider helping. Make it a father/son family thing. Contact Peter Hibbs or Mark Boyd to help.

A Brief Latin Glossary for the Lutheran Armchair Theologian

— by Pastor Tom Chryst

Lex semper accusat -----	"The Law Always Accuses"
Lex orandi, lex credendi -----	"The Law of Prayer, The Law of Belief"
Simul justus et peccator -----	"Simultaneous Saint and Sinner"
Ex nihilo-----	"Out of Nothing"
Sola scriptura-----	"Scripture Alone"
Sola gratia-----	"Grace Alone"
Sola fide -----	"Faith Alone"
Fides qua, fides quae -----	"The Faith That Believes; The Faith That Is Believed"
Ex opere operato-----	"By The Doing of the Action"
Quia and quatenus	
Oratio, meditatio, tentatio	
Soli deo Gloria	

We are nearing the end of our brief Latin glossary. This month's phrase, "**Ex opere operato**", or "By the doing of the action" or "by the working of the work" revolves around a question of how the sacraments function.

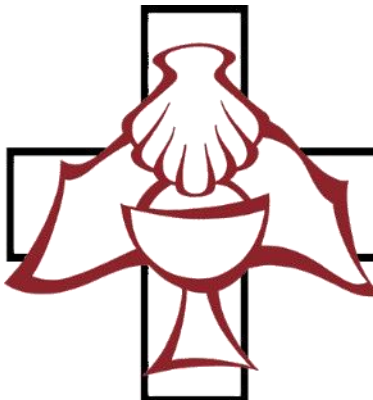
Certainly, in the time of the Reformers, there were many false teachings and unbiblical practices underway in the Roman churches, especially when it came to the Sacraments. One of these that was commonly taught was a form of "ex opere operato", in which "going through the motions" of a sacrament was regarded as the most important thing. Furthermore, some thought that as long as the ceremony or rite was done properly, it would always have the desired effect.

But it isn't just Rome that has fallen victim to this problem. LCMS founding President, C.F.W. Walther accuses even some Lutherans of the same sort of error:

*One would indeed think it to be utterly impossible for a Christian minister to teach that the Sacraments produce salutary effects **ex opere operato**; still, that is what happens again and again. This awful error is taught by the very men who wish to pass for genuinely strict Lutherans, every time they discuss the Sacraments. When they have finished unfolding their doctrine of Baptism, every hearer has received the unmistakable impression that, in order to get to heaven, it is merely necessary to submit to the act of*

being baptized. When they have finished their presentation of the doctrine of the Lord's Supper, the people are convinced that, to obtain the forgiveness of sins, all that a person has to do is to mount the altar steps and take Communion, because God has attached His grace to this external action. (THIRTY-FOURTH EVENING LECTURE. September 11, 1885.)

In my own experience, I've noticed an "ex opere mindset" with many people especially relative to Holy Baptism. A young couple has a child, but with only a very tenuous connection to the church, yet they still have some kind of regard and thought to get the child baptized. But often, it is a simplistic, "ex opere" mindset they bring, thinking that simply going through the motions of this ritual will save their child from eternal judgment. The external action, again, becomes what is most important.



So what is the corrective to this false idea? If it's not simply the outward motions that are important in either the sacrament of Holy Baptism (the washing) or the sacrament of Holy Communion (the eating and drinking), then what is?

Perhaps a simple return to the Small Catechism is the best place to start:

"How can water do such great things?"

*"Certainly not just water, but the word of God in and with the water does these things, **along with the faith** which trusts this word of God in the water."*

and

"How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?"

*"Certainly not just eating and drinking do these things, but the words written here: Given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. These words, along with the bodily eating and drinking, are the main thing in the Sacrament. **Whoever believes these words has exactly what they say: forgiveness of sins.**"*

And so we see that in both Baptism AND the Lord's Supper, it's not the outward action of washing or eating and drinking that is what truly effects the blessings. But it instead 1) The Word of God connected to these actions, and 2) The faith of the recipient that applies those promised blessings.

(Continued on page 4)

A Brief Latin Glossary, cont.

The Word, as always, is central. Without the Word, these are empty rituals and no sacraments at all. But it is Christ's word of promise that establishes them, empowers them, or as we sometimes say, "puts the blessings in" the Sacraments. These are therefore in no way human works, but divine works, gifts, in which God does exactly what He says.

But faith is important, too. For without faith, the blessings of the sacraments do us no good. Without faith, they are futile, or in the case of the Lord's Supper, even harmful to us (1 Corinthians 11). Instead, "He is truly worthy and well-prepared **who has faith** in these words..." Faith, which itself, is also a gift of God. But if we want to receive the gifts rightly, and receive what they promise, we ought to believe Jesus when He makes the promise. "This is my body and blood for you, for the forgiveness of sins" and likewise, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved".

Sadly, it seems, some would point our attention only to the outward acts of the Sacraments. A shallow, false sense of security from a warped understanding will do us no good. That's a law-oriented way to see these things anyway, as if we've done what we needed to, and now we're covered. We've met the requirements, and now we can rest easy. We've done our duty, and now we can happily go our way.

But rightly believing and trusting in the grace of God in Jesus Christ, given in these humble and blessed forms of water and bread and wine,

we do receive forgiveness, life and salvation. We rightly see them as gifts of God, not works of man. And we properly understand they give blessings to those who trust the Word of God connected to them.

So perhaps a better Latin phrase to describe how this works would be, "**per fidem operationis Dei**", that is, "by faith in God's working". For he has, and still does, all things well, for the good of his people and the salvation of our souls. And the Spirit gives us the faith to believe it. To God be the glory! Amen.



Annual Auction for Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy

Denim & Diamonds

Friday, April 22, 2016
6:00—10:00 p.m.
Marriott Solana
5 Village Circle
Westlake, Texas

Tickets
\$55.00 per person
\$105 per couple
\$500 for a table of ten
Includes meal, iced tea, and water.

*Tickets may be purchased from the
School Office M-F, and in the narthex on Sundays.
Checks may be made out to MLCA.*

Menu
Garden Salad
Chicken or Beef
Dessert
Cash Bar

You'll Come On Over!

MLCA Auction

This year's annual fundraising action will be held on Friday, April 22, at the Marriott Solana in Westlake.

Tickets can be purchased, at the times noted, in the School Office and narthex, but you may also purchase your tickets online, from the comfort of your own computer or smartphone! The tickets will be delivered to you in your church mailbox.

Visit MLCA's website to order:
<http://www.mlcatexas.org/fundraising/donate-online>

Spring has sprung, and our Preschool is blooming!

Come see what's new!

- ⊗ Classes for 18 months to Pre-Kindergarten
- ⊗ New family-friendly schedule with half-day and full-day options
- ⊗ Early bird option (8 AM - 9 AM)
- ⊗ Before and after school care
- ⊗ Reduced tuition rates for 2016-2017

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CLASSICAL ACADEMY

1308 Whitley Road ~ Keller, Texas

Preschool Spring Open House

Thursday, April 21, 2016

10:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

or

6:00 p.m.—7:00 p.m.

If you cannot attend, call

817-431-5486

for a tour!

www.mlcatexas.org



Sing a new song by Vicki L. Main, Kantor

Our April Hymn of the Month is *Our Paschal Lamb, That Sets Us Free* – LSB 473 – found in the Easter section of the hymnal. The text is by **Martin Franzmann**, who also wrote such hymn texts as *With High Delight Let Us Unite* (LSB 483), *In Adam We Have All Been One* (LSB 569), *Thy Strong Word* (LSB 578), *Preach You the Word* (LSB 586) and *O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth* (LSB 834). The tune (REGION THREE) is by **Walter Pelz**.

In previous Hymn of the Month songs, LSB 586 (October 2013) & LSB 834 (October 2010), we were introduced to **Martin H. Franzmann** (1907-1976). He was a LCMS theologian, professor, and composer. In addition to hymns, he wrote five books published by Concordia Publishing. A biography about him was also written, entitled *Thy Strong Word: The Enduring Legacy of Martin Franzmann* by Richard N. Brinkley.

Walter L. Pelz (b. 1926) is a retired Professor of Music at Bethany College, Lindsborg, Kansas, and a composer, choral director, organist, and educator. He has composed over 200 published works, including verses and offertories, anthems, solos, cantatas, hymns, choral symphonies, and organ works—many with instruments. He is a member of the America Guild of Organists and a charter member of the Associate of Lutheran Church Musicians, where he received the "Faithful Servant" award in 2015.

473 Our Paschal Lamb, That Sets Us Free

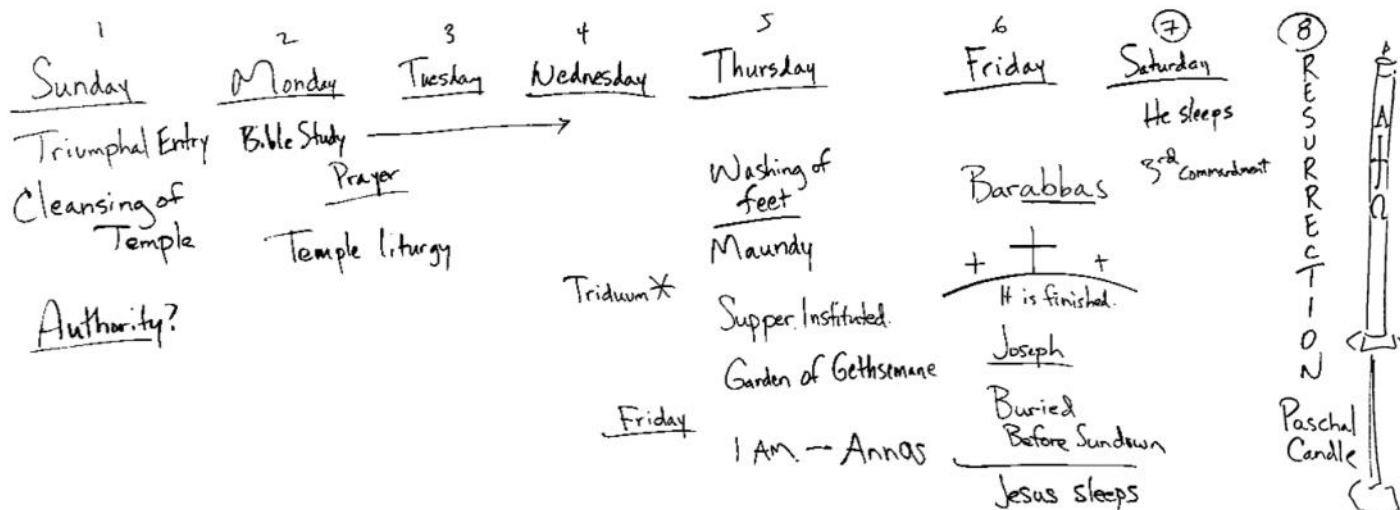
- 1 Our Paschal Lamb, that sets us free,
Is sacrificed. O keep
The feast of freedom gallantly;
Let alleluias leap: Refrain.
- ref Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Again
Sing alleluia, cry aloud: Alleluia! Amen!
- 2 Let all our lives now celebrate
The feast; let malice die.
Let love grow strong anew, and great,
Let truth stamp out the lie. Refrain.
- 3 Let all our deeds, unanimous,
Confess Him as our Lord
Who by the Spirit lives in us,
The Father's living Word. Refrain.

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Scriptural references include 1 Corinthians 5:7-8, Ephesians 5:2, and Romans 12:1-2.

The text indeed expresses the reason for our Easter joy – may yours be abundant in singing the hymn this month!

Young Adult Group by Daniel Sweet



This month in the Young Adult Group (YAG), Pastor Cholak slowed our study in Exodus to explain Holy Week and the biblical parallels. Starting on Palm Sunday, we

followed Jesus through each day during the celebration week. We saw how the Exodus law was referenced on the 7th day when Jesus rested in the tomb.

Join the YAG down the hill in the MAC building on Mondays at 7PM; Contact Daniel Sweet 817-454-7057.

Youth News

WAY APRIL 2016

Date	Time	Event	Location	Contact
April 8	MOVED	RESCHEDULED: Garage Sale Setup	to May 13	Barbara Brewer 817-897-4460
April 9	MOVED	RESCHEDULED: Garage Sale	to May 14	Barbara Brewer 817-897-4460
April 16	MOVED	RESCHEDULED: The Secret Chambers	to June	Barbara Brewer 817-897-4460
April 23	8:00 AM	FUN: Coleson's FROG Walk/Run (\$30)	Lake Worth	Pamela Buhler 972-342-7697
April 24	12:30 PM	SERVICE: Braille	MAC	Barbara Piñera 682-552-3622
April 24	2:30 PM	FUN: S'mores and Games	MAC	Vera Sweet 817-454-7057
April 28	6:30 PM	FUN: Barber of Seville Opera (\$5 RSVP)	Bass Hall	Pamela Buhler 972-342-7697

Coordinator: Daniel Sweet 817-454-7057

Tuesday Chess Club by Daniel Sweet



Hannah Liddle

On another Tuesday, Pastor Chryst shared insight on a double check move. As soon as the presentation was over, a pair of eyes were staring me down. William Johnstone kept me in place as he swiftly set up a chess board. I could tell this was not his first time to tour the board as he chased me from each angle and made me reconsider every move. William taught me how each move will

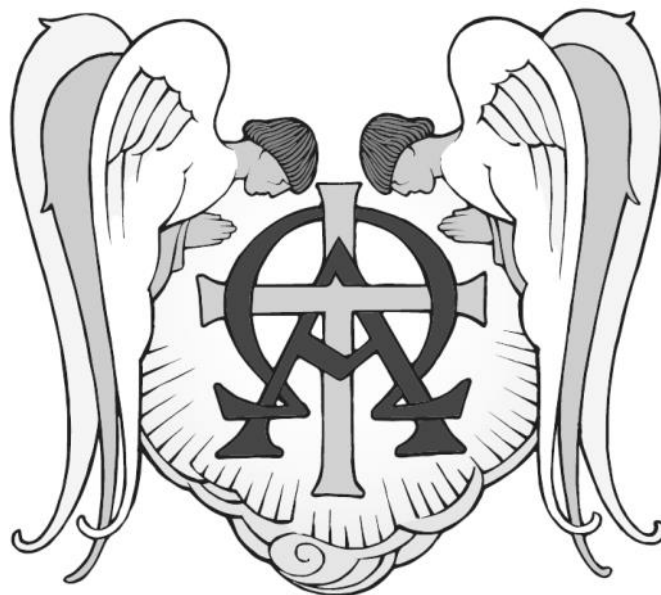
eventually have a consequence and did not give me a chance to try out the recent topic on the double check.

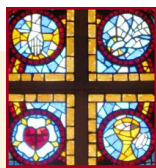
You are invited to join the Messiah Lutheran Classical Academy Chess Club on Tuesdays at 3:30pm. There are two groups: beginner and advanced. For more information, to volunteer or participate, please contact Pastor Chryst.

Vacation Bible School

VBS registration is now open! Please visit the website at messiahkeller.org/vbs or navigate through the church website under the Education tab. The theme is "Angels: God's Messengers," more details are online.

VBS will be June 27 to 30 from 9AM to noon, we are expecting to fill up and have a wait list; please register now. If you would like to contribute, volunteer or donate, please email Messiah.VBS@messiahkeller.org; Contact Tamarra Liddle.





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

www.messiahkeller.org

Braille Center News



This Year's National Volunteer Week is fast approaching (10-16 April); but every week is volunteer week at Messiah. This past quarter we have received an incredible amount of help from our church volunteers, young, young adults and the not so young.

Messiah Braille Center #132 is one of over 300 centers in the United States. We currently have three active volunteer groups: J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth) is led by Helen Vacha and meets on the second Thursday of each month after Bible study. This group has been producing Bibles for over five years now. W.A.Y. (Willing and Active Youth) gets together once a month to produce Ezekiel books, followed by

a fun activity; and YAG (Young Adults Group), began six months ago with Daniel Sweet organizing their meetings on the third Sundays of the month and as needed.

The word of God in Swahili and English is reaching our Christian family far away from our shores. Our volunteers have produced over 1,900 Braille Bible books in the last six years. If you stop by the Messiah Activities Center, you will see a wall world map with pins indicating places where our Bible books have been shipped, places such as India, Kenya and Russia.

There are many ways to help this ministry. Producing Bible books is what most people envision when

thinking of volunteering at the Braille Center; but much help is needed on a monthly basis to fill out custom forms, cutting cardboards, packaging the books, taking a trunk full of boxes to the post office, etc. Donations can be made as well to Lutheran Braille Workers (ear marked *Work Center #132*). You can contact us if you would like more information, to set up a workshop, or visit our center. Join us on our dedicated journey to reach the blind or visually impaired as they read and come out of the darkness.

Erasmo and Barbara Piñero
Braille Center No. 132
Messiah Lutheran Church
Keller, Texas
682-552- 3622



Yeah Young Adults! Back at it again with the white braille books!

We all worked a little harder during this busy month to complete another shipment to Africa.

Please join any Braille group on a selected Sunday after late service; contact Barbara Piñero at 682-552-3622.