



In the Presence of our Posterity

by Pastor Glenn Huebel

Therefore, in the presence of God and of all Christendom among both our contemporaries and our posterity, we wish to have testified that the present explanation of all the foregoing controverted articles here explained, and none other, is our teaching, belief, and confession in which by God's grace we shall appear with intrepid hearts before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and for which we shall give an account. (Formula of Concord, Conclusion)

The Lutheran Church was molded and refined in the furnace of Confession. Luther courageously stood before Pope and Emperor to state publicly what he believed on the basis of Holy Scripture. He was not merely risking his job, comfort or freedom, but his very life. In fact, he was well aware that most Confessors before him who contradicted the Pope finished their life on a stake in the middle of a bonfire. Yet he felt conscience-bound to speak the truth of God no matter the cost. He feared God more than he feared man. We might

wonder how many brilliant theologians before Luther had comprehended the Gospel doctrine of justification by grace through faith in Christ, but chose to remain silent in order to avoid the terrifying consequences. Luther's supporters well understood the necessity and the danger of confessing Christ before men. It has become a major part of Lutheran heritage to confess. A compromising Lutheran is as oxymoronic as a prissy Green Beret or a timid Navy Seal. It's just not in Lutheran DNA. Our language is marked by "Here I stand," not "What is truth?"

Luther and his followers have endured criticism and scorn from the world because of this bold, uncompromising spirit of confession. The scholar Erasmus took Luther to task on his inflexible and brash attitude because it was dividing the Church. Luther responded, "I hold that a solemn and vital truth, of eternal consequence, is at stake in this discussion; one so crucial and fundamental that it ought to be maintained and defended even at the cost of life, though as a result the whole world should be, not just

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Anton von Werner, *Luther at the Diet of Worms*. 1877

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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

thrown into turmoil and uproar, but shattered in chaos and reduced to nothingness.” (*Bondage of the Will*, Martin Luther)

The confessional spirit is even more abrasive to the world today because relativism reigns and the very idea of objective truth is viciously attacked as an evil. Before we ourselves are led into the deception that mankind can create a utopia only if we discard the notion of objective truth, let us consider what Jesus says. “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32). Relativism produces chaos and confusion, not freedom. It is just another lie of Satan to turn us away from the liberating truth of God. It was tried and found wanting in the period of the Judges where everyone “did what was right in his own eyes.” Relativism will work no better today. We Lutherans must continue to confess today even though the world hates the very concept of confession. Confessors say “this is true.” The world says “this is my opinion”.

Why did the Confessors of the Church in every age risk life and limb to speak the truth publicly? Did they do it out of stubborn pride and arrogance as they are so often accused? I think not. Pride and arrogance seem to work together with greed and self preservation. A

proud person usually wants to be adored and exalted by others, not castigated and despised. A proud person does not want to share the sufferings of Christ. He is an enemy of the cross (Phil 3:18). They confessed because of the living hope inspired in them through the Gospel. They knew that Jesus had been raised from the dead and that He will come again in glory to judge all people. They confessed in the confidence that *by God’s grace we shall appear with intrepid hearts before the judgment seat of Jesus Christ and for which we shall give an account*. Knowing that truth will be ultimately vindicated inspires courage. Again, Luther responds to Erasmus, “I am not such a silly fool that I would have been willing to sustain and champion this cause for so long, with such fortitude and firmness (obstinacy, you call it), often at the risk of my life, hated and plotted against continually – enduring, in a word, the rage of men and of devils together – merely to gain money (which I neither have nor want), or renown (which I could not have if I wanted it in a world that hates me so), or to protect my life (which is always forfeit now).” (*Bondage of the Will*, Martin Luther)

They also knew that their witness to the truth of the Gospel would be heard by future generations. They were bold to confess: *in the presence of God and of all*

Christendom among both our contemporaries and our posterity, we wish to have testified that the present explanation of all the foregoing controverted articles. The concept of confessing for the sake of posterity appears frequently throughout the Lutheran Confessions. They wanted their children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and others to know where they stood and why. They wanted to establish a spiritual heritage of faith.

This may seem like an odd concern in our present day since we live in a culture that despises both past and future generations as if this one is the only generation that matters. How else can we explain the growing contempt for American history and tradition (not to mention Church history and tradition), as well as the indifference we seem to have about passing on an astronomical national debt to generations that follow? We live among people who have no appreciation for the sacrifices made to give us our life and freedom, and no compassion or care for those who will have to pay our debt and clean up our mess. May the example of our spiritual forefathers inspire us, in Christ, to care for our posterity as our forefathers cared for us.

Blessings in Christ,
Pastor Huebel



Thanksgiving Eve Worship

Wednesday, November 27, at 7:00 p.m.

Voters Endorse Plan for MLCA Headmaster



The School Board requested the Voters of Messiah in October to consider an aggressive plan to develop our Classical Academy to its fullest potential as a ministry of the Church. The Board has proposed to upgrade the search for a new Principal into a full-time Headmaster search. While a Principal is regarded as a manager of the existing school, a Headmaster would be further tasked with developing and implementing a vision for the school to bring it to maturity, including the reestablishment of the Rhetoric Phase of the educational program (High School). The job description and commensurate salary must reflect the new expectations. After much discussion the Voters Assembly unanimously endorsed the School Board proposal as a reasonable plan to grow this ministry which has so much potential for

blessing families in our rapidly declining culture.

It is vitally important that the Headmaster be well acquainted with the concept of classical education and experienced in school leadership. He or she must also be a knowledgeable and well-seasoned Lutheran. We want this person to be the face of the school ministry in our community and to guide us further into academic excellence and growth. The Voters recognize that a fair salary for such a person will probably exceed our present ability to fund. It is anticipated that an additional \$40,000 to \$50,000 per year will be needed to support this endeavor. The task of organizing a two year fundraising drive to supplement the upgraded position was given to the Board of Stewardship.

Some may not realize what an integral part the MLCA now plays in the health and welfare of our congregation as a whole. Most obviously it is a ministry of the Word in and of itself. We spend many hours a day with both members and non-members teaching the Word through various subjects,

and by discipline and example. The MLCA is also our primary evangelism outreach to the community. A large percentage of our new members in the past decade have come to us either directly or indirectly through the school. Many of them have indicated that would never have walked into our church or considered the Lutheran faith had not they come to know us through the school. The MLCA is also a magnet for young Lutheran families considering a home in our area. Many have been attracted to us and become members because we have a school. The school speaks volumes about our priorities as a congregation. For these reasons and others we recognize that what is good for the school is also beneficial for the congregation. If the school struggles, the congregation will suffer as well.

If you wish to know more about these plans for the school please feel free to talk to one of the school board members. You may also see the job description for the Headmaster position printed in the bulletin. Your help and support are greatly appreciated.

The Elders' Corner by Stephen Inglehart

Article V of the Augsburg Confession reads as follows:

“To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, provided the gospel and the sacraments” (Tappert, AC V, 1).”

The term “office of the ministry” is translated from the German “Predigamt”, and from the Latin, “ministerium.” Predigamt is literally,

“the Preaching Office,” that is, the Office established within the Church to deliver the preaching of the Gospel and the administering of the Sacraments. If there is to be faith created in human hearts, the Gospel must be preached (Romans 10:17). The Lutheran Confessions recognize from Holy Scripture that there is one divinely instituted Office within the Church, the Office of the Holy Ministry. This is not to say that the

Church is not free to establish auxiliary offices to take care of whatever issues may arise in the day-to-day life of the Church. In fact, the Church did just that in establishing the Office of the Diaconate in the Book of Acts, to take care of temporal matters, like making sure that the widows among them were cared for, and free the Apostles to devote themselves to

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Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling

Do you have a servant's heart? Are you looking for an opportunity to volunteer? Ephesians 2:10 tells us that we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works. There are many opportunities for us to volunteer our time. You may remember serving food to the homeless at the Union Gospel Mission, showing your love at Christ's Haven for Children, sewing quilts for Lutheran World Relief, helping to coordinate the Angel Tree, or joining a group visiting the Whitley Place. The opportunities here at Messiah are endless.



Messiah's Confirmation Workshop, led by Ava Walker.

Being a servant flows out of our heart as a demonstration of the faith within us. For parents, it is equally important to find volunteer opportunities for our children, to train their hearts to serve the Lord by serving others. *"The King will reply, 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.'"* Matthew 25:40 Training our children to live a life of service is what God calls us to do, as he says in Proverbs 22:6 "Train a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it."

Here at Messiah, there is a wonderful opportunity for us (and our children) to serve - printing books of the Bible at our Messiah Braille Center. Our Braille Center prints 10 out of the 66 books of the Bible: Esther, Job, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John and Jude. A group of faithful volunteers host monthly workshops so you and your children may volunteer as Messiah Lutheran Braille workers - publishing Braille books of the Bible and shipping them all over the world. What a precious gift it must be for a visually impaired person to receive.

There are many ways to volunteer at our Messiah Braille Center including:

- Participating in one of the monthly workshops
- Punching the Braille paper (preparing it for binding)
- Becoming shipping coordinator for the Braille books produced
- Cutting dimensioned cardboard for shipping
- Hosting a Braille workshop for a church group

Please consider these opportunities as we strive to bring light to those living in darkness.

Our monthly Braille workshops include:

- 2nd Thursday 6:30-8:30pm - Open Workshop led by Laralynn Conaway
- 3rd Thursday 12-2pm - Pastor Kitzmann's Bible Study Group
- 2nd Sunday 12-2pm - Messiah Youth Group led by Mark Boyd



Pastor Kitzmann's Bible Study Group.

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- 3rd Sunday 12-3:30pm - Holy Shepherd Youth Group
- 4th Sunday 1-3pm - Confirmation Students (6-8th grade) led by Ava Walker

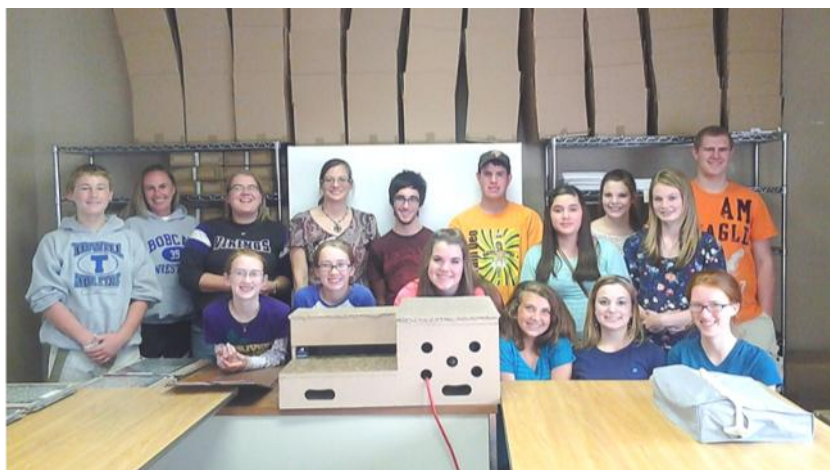
Please note: We no longer collect paper towel tubes or egg cartons, but can always use plastic grocery sacks and cardboard cutters (size 10 ¼ x 12 ¼).

* A special thanks to all of our workshop leaders and to Paul Sawall who has been one of our faithful cardboard cutters for the past 3 years!

To God be all the Glory,
Buckley and Pamela Buhler
Messiah Braille Center #132



MLCA graduate Andrew Petering (back row, 2nd from right) led a group from his church to volunteer. Next month Brian Lang (back row, far right) will be performing his Eagle Scout project at our Braille Center.



Holy Shepherd Youth Group



Shipping one month's order of Braille Bibles.

The Elders' Corner, cont.

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doing what was proper to their Office, that is, preaching and teaching and prayer. However, such auxiliary Offices are not divinely instituted.

Why would God institute such an Office in the Church? Well, there is an old saying, "Everybody's job is nobody's job." Having a distinct Office of the Holy Ministry in the Church insures that what is essential – the preaching and teaching of the Gospel and the administering of the Sacraments – will be done. Hence, God calls a man into the Office through the Church to do what must be done, if faith is to be created. That man, once called, is publicly placed into the Office through the rite of Ordination. There is then no doubt as to who it is in the Congregation whose task it is to preach and teach the Gospel. Sunday morning should not see us standing

about, scratching our collective noggins, and wondering, "Whose turn is it this week?" We all instead turn to the fellow in the vestments whose Divine Call and Ordination into the Office mark him as "the one," and expect that he will do precisely what he is called to do, deliver the Word of Christ for the creation and strengthening of our faith.

Messiah Lutheran Church has just lost one of its Pastors to retirement ("Well done, thou good and faithful servant"). We are of sufficient size that it would be very difficult indeed to serve all the needs of the congregation with a sole Pastor. There are Divine Services to be held, staff devotions and chapel services for our school, hospital and shut-in calls to be made so that the Gospel and Sacraments may be brought to those who cannot come themselves to receive it. There are Bible classes

to be taught, both on Sunday morning and during the week. Youth Confirmands and adult inquirers require instruction in the faith "once and for all handed down to the saints" (Jude 3). It falls to the Pastor to provide Biblical counsel to those suffering from all those afflictions which are our lot as fallen sinners in a fallen world. The duties of the Office are by no means limited to Sunday mornings. Even with two Pastors, both were kept more than busy with all the things that need to be done.

God grant us wisdom, patience, as we go through the process of Calling another Pastor to serve among us. God grant that the man who is to be Called and installed into the Office here will be doctrinally sound and solidly Confessional. Indeed, God grant that we as a congregation insist on nothing less. After all, faith depends on it.

The One Hundred Thousand Dollar Carrot

Texas District Church Extension Fund



When Steve Block, Executive Director of the Texas Church Extension Fund (CEF), told key officers of Messiah last week that they could increase the congregation's revenue by nearly \$100,000 per year without adding a cent to the offering plate, he got their attention. What's the catch, right? Well, there really isn't one. We discovered that we haven't exactly been exercising good stewardship by using our resources most effectively. Here's how we can add an extra \$100,000 in revenue to our budget without costing anyone anything – in fact, we all profit.

The Church Extension Fund has loaned Messiah a total of about \$3 million over the past three decades. Our house payment for those loans is nearly \$300,000 per year. Where did the CEF obtain the money to loan us? They offer savings accounts, CD's, IRA's, etc. to members of Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod congregations in Texas. The CEF pays investors a competitive rate of interest and then reinvests this money in loans to Texas Lutheran Churches – like ours. Messiah pays about 5 1/2% interest on our loans, which was the best available anywhere when we borrowed. All this is good, but the story gets better.

Since the CEF loans money that belongs to members of the churches, they offer strong incentives for members to invest. They offer graduated interest reductions and rebates to congregations on the basis of member investments. At present our members have invested about \$500,000 in CEF, which amounts to about 17% of our loan principle. When we have an additional \$10,000 invested in CEF (17 1/2%) we will receive an immediate reduction in our interest rate that will amount to a savings of about \$15,000 per year. We are free to spend that extra \$15,000 any way we wish. We can pay on the principle of our loan,

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\$100,000 Carrot, cont.

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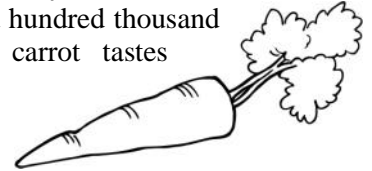
subsidize future staff additions, technology upgrade, missions, etc. The story gets better – much better. If we reach 35% investments we will receive a 2 ½% reduction in interest rate. If we reach 100% investments (\$3 million), we will keep our 2 ½% interest rate reduction and receive an additional 1% rebate annually. Those percentages add up to nearly \$100,000 per year.

Our goal for the first year is to reach the 35% level of investments in CEF which will save us over \$50,000 per

year in mortgage payments. That means we aspire to have \$1,050,000 in CEF investments by October, 2014. That is an additional \$550,000. It may seem like an unreachable figure, but if EVERYONE works together we can do it. Most of us have savings accounts of some kind stashed away in various places that could easily be moved into CEF. Do you have an emergency fund, a college fund, a vacation fund, or a home improvement fund somewhere? Do you have an IRA that can be rolled over? Please pick up information on

CEF investment opportunities and consider what you might be able to use. If you have questions about the CEF program you may call upon Walter and Waldeen Cornelius who are our congregation CEF representatives. They can either answer your questions or point you in the right direction to find answers.

Wouldn't you love to see what a hundred thousand dollar carrot tastes like?



Stephen Ministry Books in the Library

The following three books have been added to our church library, a gift from our Stephen Ministry program. (Descriptions are from the Stephen Ministry site.)

Christian Caregiving – a Way of Life (248.5 HAU)

Christians sometimes wonder, “What difference can my faith make in my everyday caring and relating?” *Christian Caregiving—a Way of Life* provides an answer. It describes what sets Christian caregiving apart—and explains how this distinctive approach to caregiving can become a way of life for you. *Christian Caregiving—a Way of Life* is an inspirational guide for Christians who want to improve the quality of the care they give to the people around them—family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, customers, and clients.

Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart (259.6 HAU)

How to Relate to Those Who Are Suffering “*Like one who takes away a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.*” (Proverbs 25:20) This

proverb describes an all-too-human problem each of us faces from time to time. We want to reach out and help those who are hurting—but the words or actions we use may unintentionally add to their burdens instead of easing their pain.

Don't Sing Songs to a Heavy Heart provides a much-needed guide for giving people comfort in their times of need. Forged in the crucible of his wife's 3½-year war with ovarian cancer and her death, Kenneth C. Haugk shaped this book through research with over four thousand individuals who had also experienced suffering in their lives. Dr. Haugk listened to their stories and compressed their collective wisdom into gems of compassion and understanding that everyone can learn from and use.

Built on a solid biblical foundation and brimming with God's grace, this book provides specific suggestions about what to say or do—and what *not* to say or do. It will touch your heart, expand your thinking, and help you bring Christ's loving care to hurting people when they need it most.

Speaking the Truth in Love: How to Be an Assertive Christian (248.4 KOC)

This book invites the reader to live assertively—just as Jesus did. Building on a scriptural understanding of assertive living, the reader learns how to build healthy relationships with others—one to one, in small groups, in task-oriented teams, and in congregations.

This deeply spiritual and extremely practical book makes clear:

- What assertiveness is (and isn't)
- The Biblical foundation for assertiveness
- What makes Jesus our model for living assertively
- How to be assertive in prayer and praise
- How to relate to others with greater honesty, compassion, and respect
- How to make, refuse, and negotiate requests
- How to express and receive compliments

How to handle criticism, anger, and other tough relational issues



Messiah Lutheran Church & School

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod

1308 Whitley Rd. Keller, TX 76248

Church Office: (817) 431-2345

Early Childhood Center: (817) 431-6139

Classical Academy (K—8): (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

Mrs. Ellen Malzahn, Principal, Academy

Mrs. Vicki Main, Kantor

Mrs. Shirleen Simek, Financial Director

www.messiahkeller.org

The Pastoral Vacancy

.During the past few weeks, following Pastor Kitzmann's retirement, many have expressed concern for my well-being under the stress of being a single pastor of a larger congregation. I am deeply appreciative of the thoughts and concerns of so many, and I ask for your continued prayers for me and for the ministry of this church. Let me assure all of you that the vacancy is not being ignored or its significance discounted.

The Board of Elders has expressed great concern to me and others that this vacancy be filled as soon as possible. If anything, I have held them back a little in implementing a plan of action. The Board of Elders has been working through the theoretical and theological issues of filling pastoral vacancies for about a year now, and that work continues with a mini-retreat on November 9.

The Elders have arranged for supplemental help for the Pastoral office during this vacancy. First, we hired a half-time Administration Assistant for the pastor. This will be a permanent position and will probably become full time in the future. Carol Hibbs now serves in this capacity. She is in the office on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Her tasks are exclusively connected to the Pastoral office. The Elders also arranged for teaching Confirmation I students on Thursday evenings and the Pastor's class on Sunday mornings. These tasks will be assumed by the second pastor when he is on board. Our third grade teacher, Stephan Inglehart is serving in that capacity in the interim.

I am not asking nor desiring to be a sole pastor at Messiah for the long term. I fully recognize my limitations, including the possibility – and probability – of burn-out if the vacancy endures for a long time. I also think the congregation's ministry suffers without adequate staffing, but a fairly short term vacancy can be helpful to all of us. In the first place, we can continue to advance in reaching our long term strategic goal of financial stability. In a letter sent to the congregation in July I shared the good news that we have finally come

to a reasonably projected balanced budget for the Fiscal Year 2014. That budget already includes the full year of Pastor Kitzmann's salary and benefit package, most of which will be put in savings. We are using a portion of this money to cover the expenses of the supplemental help listed above. The remainder will be a significant sum to help us with expenses associated with the calling of a new pastor. Much of the salary of the new pastor will be built on this budget line item next year. Though there will be some added expenses, they will not be as significant as starting a new position altogether. Secondly, we have some time to carefully assess where to focus the time and energy of the second pastor, and to profile a desirable candidate. If we succeed in finding the kind of Headmaster we need, we can divert a second pastor's focus to general congregation ministries such as youth, families, education, evangelism, etc. This will enable us to develop in the areas we have needed help with in recent years. The Board of Elders will be formulating a first draft Job Description and possible ideal profile for a second pastor shortly. They anticipate giving counsel to the Voters in January concerning the best time to begin the call process. The call process will take place through a call committee consisting of both men and women chosen by the Voters and led by an Elder.

This article is written with the intent to assure the congregation that plans are being made and steps are being taken to fill the vacancy of a second pastor. Many are asking what they can do in the meantime. Here is my suggestion – a very serious one: VOLUNTEER to serve in some aspect of our congregation's ministry. If you are asked to serve, seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit rather than offer the excuse that you are too busy, or you don't want the hassle, or whatever. EVERYONE is busy and every servant who assumes a task in Christ's Church learns at one time or another the meaning of a cross. When our Lord calls us to deny self and take up a cross and follow Him, He isn't just talking to Apostles and pastors.

Without significant volunteer help, the ministry suffers even with a full staff. If no volunteers are willing to help in certain areas, the staff must assume the tasks that could well be done by others, and they become overloaded as well as underpaid. God has graciously given to EACH servant the gifts intended for the whole body (1 Cor 12:7). Let's first BELIEVE that Word of promise. Then let's put it into practice.

Where has God placed you to serve in the body?

Pastor Glenn Huebel