

RESURRECTION NEWS



January 2022

Pastor's Letter

January 2022

Brothers and sisters in Christ,

This month, we continue exploring the Ten Commandments, focusing on the Sixth Commandment:

You shall not commit adultery.

What does this mean? Answer: We should fear and love God so that we lead a sexually pure and decent life in what we say and do, and husband and wife love and honor each other.

We are living in a time where abuses of this commandment are seemingly endless. The prevalence of divorce is ever-increasing in our world. Living together outside of marriage is normal. Internet pornography use is at a sickeningly high level. And then there is the LGBT+ movement which has quickly moved from being “accepted” to being “normal.” Abuses of this commandment are everywhere.

While it would be easy to point the finger at “those people” who have endless problems and are living lives filled with sin, it’s much harder to take a serious look at ourselves and see where we have sinned and where we fall short of God’s good plan in regard to marriage and sexuality.

At the end of Genesis 2, there is a beautiful, short account of God creating Eve:

The rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, “This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh (Genesis 2:22-24).

If there’s one thing that’s immediately apparent from this text, it’s that the Lord made man and woman for each other. But he didn’t make them “for each other” with the intention of letting them decide what that means. The Lord intended Adam and Eve to be together in a very specific way: “*they shall become one flesh.*” To be “one flesh” means that man and woman become one in body, spirit, and will for a lifetime.

Problems, of course, arise in the very next chapter of Genesis when the man and woman aren’t united. Adam leaves his wife alone to have a conversation with the serpent even though he was the one to whom God gave the command. Eve didn’t bother consulting her husband when the serpent began questioning God’s command. And, of course, that story ends in sin, finger-pointing, and exile from paradise.

Sure, Adam & Eve’s sin in Genesis 3 wasn’t exactly adultery per se. But their sin was a failure to love and honor each other in the one flesh union into which God had placed them. Their sin, in a lot of ways, is the template for all future human sin, both in general and specifically in regard to the sixth commandment.

When we divorce outside of the biblical exceptions, we fail to love and honor the one flesh union of marriage. When we engage in sexual activity outside of marriage, we fail to love and honor the one flesh union of marriage. When we view pornography, we fail to love and honor the one flesh union of marriage. In short, when we do anything which undermines God’s good gift of marriage, we fail to love and honor the one flesh union of marriage.

The reality is, all of us have sinned against the sixth commandment in one form or another. But your sin does not need to be the end of the story. As the Psalmist so beautifully said, “*I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and You forgave the iniquity of my sin*” (Psalm 32:5). It doesn’t matter what sins you have committed. It doesn’t matter how unforgivable you feel. When we confess our sins, Christ forgives us. No ifs, ands, or buts about it. Even when we have sinned against God’s good design for marriage, there is still forgiveness for sinners like you and me. Thanks be to God!

As we begin a new year and many of us are thinking about “New Year’s Resolutions”, I want to encourage you to use this time to reflect on your life and the ways in which the Lord’s commandments might be calling you to “be new.” Maybe it’s a habit or lifestyle which causes you to break the sixth commandment. Maybe it’s something else. Whatever it might be, I want to encourage you to remember that as the forgiven child of God, now is a great time to “be new” and live in the newness of life that Christ’s forgiveness has won for you. If you need to talk, my door is always open!

Happy New Year and God’s richest blessings in Christ to you and your family!

Peace in Jesus,
Pastor Akers

Notes from your Deaconess

*Now greet the swiftly changing year with joy and penitence sincere...
Remember now the Son of God and how He shed His infant blood*...
Rejoice! Rejoice! With thanks embrace another year of grace.
(LSB 896:1,2)*

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

We greet another January—that month named for the Roman god Janus associated with doors, gates, entrances, and beginnings. Artists often depicted him with two faces—one looking backward and one forward, alluding to the threshold where some change occurs once passed.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, however, told his disciples and the crowds *“I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture”* (John 10:9). He made this declaration in the same passage where he also spoke of being the good shepherd. In Luke’s gospel, the Lord told an inquirer *“Strive to enter through the narrow door”* (Luke 13:24a). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus used a different Greek word, but with similar meaning: *“Enter by the narrow gate”* (Matthew 7:13a). We understand from these statements that Jesus is that sole means of access to the Father, to full life, and salvation. When Jesus died *“And uttered a loud cry and breathed his last...the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom”* (Mark 15:37, 38). The access to the most holy place opened through his death.

Our daily lectionary readings move from Isaiah and Luke once we begin the season of Epiphany on January 6. We will turn to the prophet Ezekiel who had many vivid strange visions and prophecies given him by the Lord for his fellow Hebrew brothers and sisters in exile in Babylon. We, too, live in exile and need this nourishment. The season of Epiphany relates to how Christ is revealed throughout the world—not just to the people of Israel through whom and by whom he came for us all. Prophets Ezekiel, Joel, and Zechariah, whose books of prophecy we will read during January, deal with this truth. Paul’s epistle to the Romans, the New Testament reading for most of the month (and the focus of Pastor’s midweek Bible study sessions), shows clearly how he came for all people.

I plan to hold women’s Bible studies (8:30 to 10am) on Saturdays January 8 and 22 downstairs in the church fellowship hall—weather and health permitting. I will continue to also schedule the means to participate remotely via Zoom, and will send links if you let me know to include you in my emails prior to the meetings. We are currently reading the book of Daniel, and may move into Ezekiel as it’s in the lectionary readings—but I haven’t yet decided the next focus of our studies.

Under his mercy,
Sharon M. Conover

“We were buried therefore with [Christ Jesus] by baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life” Romans 6:4.

* New Year’s Day is the Feast of Jesus Circumcision and Naming—the eighth day after his birth

Sunday Morning Schedule

8:30 a.m. "Precautionary" Divine Service (masks required)

10:00 a.m. Devine Service (masks optional)

11:15 a.m. Fellowship

Midweek Bible Study & Services

10:30 a.m. - Bible Class (in person only)

12:00 p.m. - Prayer Service—Matins (in person or Facebook live stream)

6:30 p.m. - Prayer Service—Vespers (in person or Facebook live stream)

7:00 p.m. - Bible Class (in-person & Zoom)

January Stewardship

	<u>January 2</u>	<u>January 9</u>	<u>January 16</u>	<u>January 23</u>	<u>January 30</u>
<u>Acolyte</u>	10:00 Hayley Farr	10:00 Evan Farr	10:00 Hayley Farr	10:00 Evan Farr	10:00 Hayley Farr
<u>Worship Assistant</u>	8:30 Mark Larsen	8:30 Brian Watson	8:30 Chris Batson	8:30 Mark Larsen	8:30 Glenn Carlson Sr.
	10:00 Brad Fitzpatrick	10:00 Charlie MacPherson	10:00 Mark Larsen	10:00 Dan Callahan	10:00 Steve Farr
<u>Ushers</u>	8:30 Wayne Pelletier	8:30 Mo Cote	8:30 Wayne Pelletier	8:30 Mo Cote	8:30 Wayne Pelletier
	10:00 John Ayotte	10:00 Mark Larsen	10:00 Brad Fitzpatrick	10:00 Glenn Carlson Jr.	10:00 Brian Watson
<u>Cantor</u>	8:30 Sharon Conover	8:30 Sharon Conover	8:30 Sharon Conover	8:30 Sharon Conover	8:30 Sharon Conover
	10:00 Jared Goldsmith	10:00 Fernando Gouvêa	10:00 Allison Farr	10:00 Steve Farr	10:00 Jared Goldsmith
<u>Greeters</u>	8:30 Dorthy McAllister	8:30 The Bendas	8:30 The Andersons	8:30 Christine Thomas	8:30 The Cotes
	10:00 The Batsons	10:00 The Dragelands	10:00 Sharon Klipp	10:00 James Breslin	10:00 The Callahans & Matt Esculano
<u>Altar Care</u>	LeeAnne Larsen	Julie Kohl	Katie Huesers	Joan Drageland	Sharon Conover
<u>Flowers</u>	The MacPhersons	The MacPhersons	Open	Open	Open
<u>Fellowship</u>	Open	Open	Sharon Klipp	Open	Dorthy McAllister

Defending the Faith

Sometimes the Best Defense is a Good Defense

Welcome to Part 2 of a multi-part series on the reliability of Sacred Scripture!

Last month, we established that the Book of Acts was written very close to the time of the events it describes – no later than A.D. 62.

Again this month, I'm borrowing heavily from some excellent work by J. Warner Wallace at www.ColdCaseChristianity.com and www.JesusSkeptic.com – and I highly recommend both for your own research.

Scripture is extensively corroborated – including by some who were opposed to Christianity.

Josephus (37-101 A.D.*), a Jewish historian and opposed to Christians as heretics, wrote: *Jesus lived in Palestine, was a wise man and a teacher, worked amazing deeds, was accused by the Jews, crucified under Pilate and had followers called Christians.*

Thallus (52 A.D.), Historian. Early Christians highly valued his work because it discussed Jesus's existence and verified events in the Gospels, including the sun darkening at the time of Jesus' death. Thallus called this a solar eclipse.

Most of his writings have been lost, but he is quoted by others, including **Julius Africanus (c. 140 A.D.)**, who wrote a fascinating account of that same "eclipse". He writes: *"Thallus calls this darkness an eclipse of the sun in the third book of his Histories, without reason it seems to me. For... how are we to believe that an eclipse happened when the moon was diametrically opposite the sun?"*

Julius Africanus went on to describe other events at the time of Jesus' death, writing *"and his [Jesus's] resurrection from the dead, all sufficiently proven to the disciples before us and to his apostles: after the most dreadful darkness fell over the whole world, the rocks were torn apart by an earthquake and much of Judaea and the rest of the land was torn down."*

Tacitus (56-120 A.D.), Historian. Tacitus wrote: *"Jesus lived in Judea, was crucified under Pontius Pilate, and had followers who were persecuted for their faith in Christ."*

Phlegon (80-140 A.D.), Historian. He affirmed more details surrounding the life and death of Jesus, including His resurrection: *"Jesus had the ability to accurately predict the future, was crucified under the reign of Tiberius Caesar and demonstrated his wounds after he was resurrected."*

There are plenty more, but right here you have Josephus, Thallus, Julius Africanus, Tacitus and Phlegon. All non-Christians and all affirming various parts of Sacred Scripture. None of these accounts are convincing on their own, but adding one account on top of the next, you can see how we're building a cumulative case. We have multiple witnesses, separated from each other by time and distance – yet the stories still align.

It's important to note that none of these writers had anything to gain by falsifying their accounts. Rather, it seems reasonable to assume that they would have been persecuted by those seeking to stomp out this new Christian sect.

If they were not motivated to lie, it seems reasonable to conclude that their accounts are reliable. That supports my initial point that Scripture is well-corroborated.

Next month we'll look at confirmation of the accuracy of Scripture by archeology.

*You might note that I refuse to use the more politically correct term C.E., meaning "Common Era". For millennia, we have used the term A.D. "the year of our Lord". I view the recent transition from A.D. to C.E. in publisher's style books as one small piece to force God out of society. I will not comply.

As always, I welcome comments and even criticism in person or via charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com.

Charlie MacPherson, SDG

Members of the Month

Once upon a time, there were two families living in Massachusetts: The Morrisises and the O'Donnells. The parents of these families knew each other: The fathers worked together, the couples ate out together, and the mothers attended craft classes together. The O'Donnells had 6 children, and they named their fourth child Beth. The Morrisises had 2 children, and they named their first child David. These children had never met, until one day...they did—in 1985 at a church service—the mothers introduced the two...but that's jumping ahead in the story.

David is the product of a mixed marriage: Lutheran and Methodist. They resided on a small hobby farm in North Reading, Massachusetts, spending time during summers with family in Maine. David's interests were: Soccer, music, outdoor recreational activities, motorcycles, 4-H, and art. He was an avid sketcher and pastel enthusiast. He was accepted, but did not ultimately attend, art school. Instead, he joined the U.S. Navy.

Beth's family was mixed as well: Baptist and Roman Catholic. She grew up in one of the oldest homes in West Peabody, Massachusetts: circa 1660. She was an active child, loving the outdoors, gardening with her mom and spending time with her very large, extended family. Growing up in a colonial home, Beth pursued her interest in regional history, particularly in the area of arts and crafts. She led tours of the home as a young girl. She attended public school and spent one year of high school in San Clemente, California during her father's work assignment to SoCal.

Upon David's return from service as an Intelligence Specialist in the Navy, he began attending college for Civil Engineering and then transferred to the University of Massachusetts at Amherst pursuing his BA in English with minors in Philosophy and Latin. In the honors program, he received a scholarship to study abroad at Oxford University where he studied under notable literary scholars. After working for a couple of years, David returned to academia for graduate work in Medieval Literature at the University of Leeds in West Yorkshire, England. Upon completion of master's degree, he postponed continuing his PhD and becoming homesick, chose to take a year or so off back in the U.S.

Beth had taken a slightly different track upon graduation from high school: After an unfulfilling year working for a large insurance firm in Boston, Beth began working in human services at both a boarding school for troubled youth, and with mentally disabled adults for an agency. Beth then became interested in American Sign Language and took a position working in the classroom with young, deaf children at Beverly School for the Deaf. She enrolled in an American Sign Language program at a local college and continued to work in human services, gaining experience with physically-impaired adults. She then worked in a rehabilitation facility for head trauma victims in New Hampshire.

No matter the work they might have been doing (David held many jobs during his years of education—in construction, carpentry, masonry, as a security guard, supervisory work, operational management), this young couple continued meeting on and off throughout the years. They began as acquaintances, became friends, and finally became quite close. School and work would separate them intermittently, but they always came back together. Within a year of David's return from England, Beth proposed to David saying: "Are we going to get married or what?" (Picture Marissa Tomei in *My Cousin Vinny*). "Gee, okay," was David's reply. Secretly, David was only awaiting her ring to be sized; and he formally reciprocated the proposal the next week! They were married in August of 1993



First son, Alarik, born in 1995, was 11 pounds 11 ounces and 24 inches long with a full head of hair. Soon after learning to walk, Alarik enjoyed pushing furniture and appliances around the house. Turning their backs for just a minute, David and Beth would find the refrigerator at the end of its cord in the middle of the kitchen with Alarik in a diaper and a grin. Or, they'd turn around and find him lifting one side of the sofa. His strongman career came to an abrupt end with hernia surgery at age two. Second son, Cianan was born in 2001—to the delight of all. Cianan was an active child, preferring the outdoors, nature and pets to team sports. He was a Lego master and at a young age, completed architectural kits with ease and accuracy. Cianan had a knack for making everyone laugh and could find the humor in every situation!

David's work eventually took them to Connecticut. Beth became involved in the home-schooling community and volunteering in the public library. David traveled a bit for work, but also became involved in local politics and serving as the Justice of the Peace. In their LCMS church, they became active participants in Sunday School and the church council. David co-led a food charity and ran a small men's breakfast group. Beth worked in the learning center.

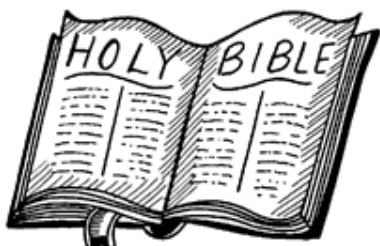
In December of 2007, David declined another promotion and left the company to take full control of a business they owned with a partner who left for personal reasons. David had already been acting CFO part-time for 3 years. Following taking it over completely, they were blessed with double-digit growth in subsequent years. It gave them the freedom to attend all school and sporting events as a family and participate in local charity work. These were the golden years. They expanded into adjacent areas and set up another business in Hartford.

David began displaying physical and neurological issues: His health and cognition began declining. Perplexing medical specialists, he spent two years suffering numerous/expensive tests. His health continued to decline until the pain made it impossible to get comfortable or function. Fortunately, he refused all pain medications. Lesions throughout his digestive tract contributed to a substantial loss of weight. They were forced to dissolve their businesses and ultimately retreat to Maine, closer to family and one particular medical specialist. Within three months, David was diagnosed with three tick-borne illnesses including neurological Lyme disease and began treatment. Beth and the boys moved to Maine several months later.

Having lost or let go of everything, they started building their lives again. A regimen of high-dose antibiotics made a dramatic improvement in David's health. He was able to work again and Beth took a supervisory job with an agency supporting DHHS. Over the next few years David enjoyed promotions within State Government.

Cianan graduated from high school during COVID in 2020, earning a diploma from Madison High School and Electrician's-Helper license from Somerset Tech. Cianan builds computers, enjoys gaming, creates items with his 3-D printer and is a great cook. Presently, he is working in construction and amassing many tools. After both attending Concordia Ann Arbor, Alarik married Angela Knicklebein of Michigan in May of 2020 and is in his final year at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. They await their call this spring.

Beth focuses on local charity work, gardening, food preservation, fiber arts, and making their two American Bullies behave. David looks forward to retirement to pursue his interests in simple living, and in art and music.



Monthly Worship

January 2, 2022
Second Sunday after Christmas

Psalm: 77:11-20
Old Testament: Genesis 46:1-7
Epistle: 1 Peter 4:12-19
Holy Gospel: Matthew 2:13-23

January 9, 2022
The Baptism of Our Lord

Psalm: 85
Old Testament: Joshua 3:1-3,7-8,13-17
Epistle: 1 Corinthians 1:26-31
Holy Gospel: Matthew 3:13-17

January 16, 2022
Second Sunday after Epiphany

Psalm: 111
Old Testament: Exodus 33:12-23
Epistle: Ephesians 5:22-33
Holy Gospel: John 2:1-11

January 23, 2022
Third Sunday after Epiphany

Psalm: 110:1-4
Old Testament: 2 Kings 5:1-15a
Epistle: Romans 1:8-17
Holy Gospel: Matthew 8:1-13

January 30, 2022
Fourth Sunday after Epiphany

Psalm: 96
Old Testament: Jonah 1
Epistle: Romans 8:18-23
Holy Gospel: Matthew 8:23-27

BIBLE QUIZ

1. **Just after casting the moneylenders out of the Temple, what did Jesus compare his followers to?**
 - A. Children
 - B. Sheep who have strayed from the flock
 - C. A ram whose horns have been caught in a thicket
 - D. Moses lifting up a snake in the wilderness
2. **In 1 John, what does John warn us not to love?**
 - A. Attractive people we are not married to
 - B. The sound of our own voice
 - C. People who are not Christians
 - D. The things of this world
3. **What was the seventh plague on Egypt (in Exodus)?**
 - A. Locusts
 - B. Storm and hail
 - C. Frogs
 - D. Flies
4. **Why did the Pharaoh of Egypt call Joseph before him?**
 - A. He heard Joseph had a really cool coat and wanted to see it
 - B. He had disturbing dreams and wanted Joseph to interpret them for him
 - C. He wanted to set up a trade route between Egypt and Mesopotamia
 - D. Joseph had been causing trouble with the Hebrew slaves
5. **What land did God give to Abraham and his descendants?**
 - A. Israel
 - B. Gallilee
 - C. The Jordan River valley
 - D. Syria



1/7 Vary Fischer
 1/8 Candace Schorr
 1/10 Joan Drageland
 1/12 Cieran Morris
 1/17 Caden Fitzpatrick
 Richard Guzman
 LeeAnne Larsen
 1/20 Evelyn Gaug
 1/22 Steve Love



1/11 Elizabeth Akers
 Benjamin Schiebel
 1/20 Joan Drageland
 1/30 Maira Goldsmith
 1/?? Yvonne Batson



1/14 Ken Zahner
 1/21 Laverne Pelletier
 Wayne Pelletier

PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



A little boy opened the big and old family Bible with fascination, and looked at the old pages as he turned them.

Suddenly, something fell out of the Bible, and he picked it up and looked at it closely.

It was an old leaf from a tree that had been pressed in between the pages.

"Momma, look what I found!" the boy called out.

"What have you got there, dear?" his mother asked.

With astonishment in the young boy's voice, he answered: "I think it's Adam's suit!"

A priest and pastor from the local parishes are standing by the side of the road holding up a sign that reads, "The End is Near! Turn around before it's too late!"

"Leave us alone you religious nuts!" yelled the first driver as he sped by.

From around the curve they heard screeching tires and a big splash. "Do you think," said one clergy to the other, "we should just put up a sign that says 'Bridge Out' instead?"

BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1.D (John 3:15)
- 2.D (1 John 2:15)
- 3.B (Exodus 9:17-19)
- 4.B (Genesis 41:20-24)
- 5.A (Genesis 13:14)

The Daily Lectionary

January 2022

1/1	Isaiah 61:1-11 / Luke 1:57-80
1/2	Isaiah 62:1-12 / Luke 2:1-20
1/3	Isaiah 63:1-14 / Luke 2:21-40
1/4	Isaiah 63:15-65:2 / Luke 2:41-52
1/5	Isaiah 65:8-25 / Luke 3:1-20
1/6	Isaiah 66:1-20 / Luke 3:21-38
1/7	Ezekiel 1:1-14,22-28 / Romans 1:1-17
1/8	Ezekiel 2:1-3:11 / Romans 1:18-32
1/9	Ezekiel 3:12-27 / Romans 2:1-16
1/10	Ezekiel 18:1-4, 19-32 / Romans 2:17-29
1/11	Ezekiel 33:1-20 / Romans 3:1-18
1/12	Ezekiel 34:1-24 / Romans 3:19-31
1/13	Ezekiel 36:13-28 / Romans 4:1-25
1/14	Ezekiel 36:33-37:14 / Romans 5:1-21
1/15	Ezekiel 37:15-28 / Romans 6:1-23
1/16	Ezekiel 38:1-23 / Romans 7:1-20
1/17	Ezekiel 39:1-10 / 17-29 / Romans 7:21-8:17
1/18	Ezekiel 40:1-4; 43:1-12 / Romans 8:18-39
1/19	Ezekiel 44:1-16, 23-29 / Romans 9:1-18
1/20	Ezekiel 47:1-13,21-23 / Romans 9:19-33
1/21	Joel 1:1-20 / Romans 10:1-21
1/22	Joel 2:1-17 / Romans 11:1-24
1/23	Joel 2:18-32 / Romans 11:25-12:13
1/24	Joel 3:1-21 / Romans 12:14-13:14
1/25	Zechariah 1:1-21 / Romans 14:1-23
1/26	Zechariah 2:1-3:10 / Romans 15:1-13
1/27	Zechariah 4:1-5:11 / Romans 15:14-33
1/28	Zechariah 6:1-7:14 / Romans 16:17-27
1/29	Zechariah 8:1-23 / 2 Timothy 1:1-18
1/30	Zechariah 9:1-17 / 2 Timothy 2:1-26
1/31	Zechariah 10:1-11:3 / 2 Timothy 3:1-17

(Daily lectionary readings taken from LSB #299-304)

Some helpful habits for home devotions:

- *Do one reading in the morning and the other in the evening.*
- *Keep a journal or make a mental note of one thought that you would like to remember from this reading.*
- *Read and discuss the daily reading with a family member or friend.*
- *Choose one verse to commit to memory, reciting it through the day.*
- *Speak to God in prayer about something from the reading that impressed or confused you in this reading.*
- *If you miss a day or two (or three) and fall behind, don't worry and don't quit! Either set aside some time to catch up or skip those readings and move on.*
- *If you're using another reading schedule or guide, stick with it. The important thing is to be in the Word daily.*