

RESURRECTION NEWS



November 2023

Pastor's Letter

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Brothers and sisters in Christ,

The cross of our Lord Jesus Christ is the center of our faith. Upon Calvary's cross death was defeated and our sins were atoned for as our Lord's sacred Body was given and His precious Blood was shed for our redemption. Our Lord's birth, His baptism in the Jordan, His miracles, and His teachings were crucial aspects of His life and work. But the cross surpasses all of these because herein the salvation of the world was accomplished.

This is why our churches place the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ front and center. And it is not an empty cross that is front and center in our churches, but a crucifix. Donning our altars is a cross upon which a *corpus* hangs—a depiction of our Lord Jesus Christ as He suffered and died. We, then, are like the Galatians “*before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified*” (Galatians 3:1).

Why is it, then, that some are uncomfortable with the crucifix? Why do we prefer an empty cross? The argument usually goes, “Jesus didn’t stay on the cross. The empty cross declares the resurrection! We should not depict Christ as crucified since He has arisen.” There are (at least) two major problems with this train of thought:

1. An empty cross does not proclaim the resurrection. Whether or not our Lord was raised from the dead, His cross would have remained empty. The cross is a place of suffering and death. The cross is not the symbol of the resurrection. If anything, an empty tomb is the symbol of our Lord's resurrection.
2. The argument “Jesus didn’t stay on the cross” just doesn’t hold up. Jesus didn’t stay in the manger either, yet no one argues that we should not depict the Christ child in the manger of Bethlehem. There is something about the cross specifically which causes offense when we see our Lord portrayed there.

And yet, Saint Paul writes: “*We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block and to the Greeks foolishness*” (1 Corinthians 1:23). It is precisely the offense of the cross which demonstrates its goodness. Jews stumble over the concept of a suffering Messiah who is cursed upon the tree of a cross (Deuteronomy 21:23). Gentiles think that it is foolishness for God to die for His people, weak and helpless upon the cross.

“*But to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God*” (1 Corinthians 1:24). The weakness of the cross is the power of God. The foolishness of the cross is the wisdom of God. By the wood of the cross joy has come into all the world because as our Lord Jesus became weak and foolish in the eyes of the world, He crushed the head of the serpent and defeated death and the grave for us.

The cross is our salvation. Therefore our Lord's blessed Body hanging upon the tree of the cross should be the most beautiful sight in all the world for the Christian. “*But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world*” (Galatians 6:14). Herein our Lord died for us. Herein He was crucified so that He might put to death your sinful self. Herein He took away the sting of death so that you might be granted eternal life.

I was asked recently, “What does God look like?” Saint John tells us: “*No one has seen God at any time. The only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He has declared Him*” (John 1:18). And Saint Paul further says of Christ: “*He is the image of the invisible God the firstborn over all creation*” (Colossians 1:15). God looks like Jesus, who came to this world so that He might suffer and die upon the cross for you. That is the image of Himself that God has given to His people. How could we not keep this blessed image at the center of our faith?

In Christ,
Pastor Akers

Notes from your Deaconess

Dear Brothers and Sisters of LCR,

Every morning I drink coffee from a cup—you may do so as well. (Although maybe you drink tea or water, not coffee.) We find cups mentioned several places in the scriptures—and blessings and woes associated with them, too.

In the book of Genesis, Joseph interpreted the dream of Pharaoh's imprisoned cupbearer, who subsequently returned to Pharaoh's service.

Joseph also used a cup hidden in his brother Benjamin's sack to test his brothers' change of heart many years after he had been sold by them into slavery.

Nehemiah, cupbearer to the king in Persia, received permission to go help rebuild the walls of Jerusalem after being in exile.

Some Psalms include mention of cups—related to blessings (*My cup overflows—Ps. 23:5*, and *I will lift up the cup of salvation—Ps. 117:13*) and also to judgment and wrath (*For in the hand of the LORD there is a cup with foaming wine, well mixed, and he pours out from it, and all the wicked of the earth shall drain it down to the dregs—Ps. 75:8*).

That allusion to a cup of wrath, judgment, and suffering which the Lord holds in his hand recurs through the writings of prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and is mentioned in Habakkuk and Zechariah. Jesus speaks of this cup when he questions his disciples James and John as to whether they would be able to drink the cup that he would drink. (See Matt. 10:22-23 and Mark 10:38-39). Thrice in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed to the Father that this cup might be removed from him, but that he would drink it if the Father so willed. And Jesus did drink that cup for us.

Yet Jesus also took the cup at the Last Supper and pronounced it a cup of a new covenant in his blood and one of blessing for the forgiveness of sins, and so instituted the Lord's Supper. In that sacrament (the physical element combined with God's word) we have the ultimate cup of blessing and salvation!

I plan to hold women's Bible studies on November 11 and 25. I think we'll begin some discussions of identity using St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians "Whose are we?" I can add you to my email list if you let me know, and can provide a Zoom link if you'd like to join that way instead of in person. We meet downstairs in classroom 104 at 8:30 a.m. for a time of fellowship, Bible study, and sharing of prayer concerns.

Under his mercy,
Sharon M. Conover

For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.
1 Corinthians 11:26

Sunday Morning Bible Class

Sunday morning Bible Class meets weekly at 8:45 a.m. in Room 201. Each week, Pastor will lead a deeper study of the Epistle Reading to help us prepare for the Divine Service. We will also have time to discuss your questions from the Read the Bible in Two Years readings.

Thursday Bible Class

Thursday Bible class meets weekly at 10:30 a.m. in Room 201. We are studying 1 Corinthians.

All Saints' Day

This year All Saints' Day is Wednesday, November 1. We will celebrate the day with Divine Services at noon and 7 p.m.

Blessed to Be a Blessing

"Blessed to Be a Blessing" encourages people to pass on wealth from God through their will/trust and beneficiary designations to bless heirs, leave a witness and support ministry. Plan to attend a special presentation at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection on **November 5th** that focuses on how we are blessed to be a blessing during fellowship hour.

Altar Guild Meeting

The Altar Guild will have a meeting on Wednesday, November 8, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 201.

Board for Missions Meeting

The next Board for Missions meeting is on Thursday, November 16, at 6:30 p.m. in Room 201.

Men's Breakfast

The November Men's Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, November 18. Breakfast is served at 8 a.m. with a study to follow.

Thanksgiving Collection

This year we are collecting for Thanksgiving gift bags for Lighthouse (Waterville Soup Kitchen). We need at least 200 of each of the following items as the Lighthouse serves many:

Hand/foot warmers, candy, individually wrapped desserts, chapstick, mini tubes toothpaste, toothbrushes

LWML

LWML is collecting gently used adult and child sized glasses, non-prescription sunglasses, and over the counter reading glasses for MOST Ministries. Glass cases are also helpful but not necessary. There is a collection box in the Narthex.

Since 1989, MOST Ministries has been distributing eyeglasses across the globe through its teams and clinics. Using a very simple testing system created specifically for them, team members test patients' eyes and provide them with the appropriate corrective lenses. An eyeglass mission team can serve 100 to 300 people per day.



Thank You

Thank you for your church's congregational donation supporting the proclamation of Jesus' death and resurrection through the voice of Issues, Etc.

Sincerely,

Todd Wilken, Host

I am so deeply thankful to God that he chose you to supply what the work of the LCMS requires. Thank you for your gifts to Mission Field – Montreal and to support Rev. Tyler and Cruz McMiller. Even in financially challenging times like these, you are confessing your trust and faith in Christ alone. And I appreciate you.

Sub cruce,

Pastor Matthew C Harrison, President

The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod

Thank you for your wonderful gift to Concordia Seminary Adopt-A-Student. The campus is bustling with activity of our students and dedication as they attend to their preparation for their future ministry.

In Christ,

Vicki Biggs, Sr V.P. Seminary Advancement

Concordia Seminary



Daylight Savings begins Sunday, November 5

November Stewardship

| | <u>November 5</u> | <u>November 12</u> | <u>November 19</u> | <u>November 26</u> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <u>Acolyte</u> | Callum Goldsmith | Evan Farr | Matthew Akers | Elizabeth Akers |
| <u>Communion Asst. t</u> | Charlie MacPherson | Dan Callahan | Brian Watson | Glenn Carlson Sr. |
| <u>Communion Usher</u> | Jeff Sammons | Glenn Carlson Jr. | Mike Hein | Steve Applebee |
| <u>Security Usher</u> | Mark Larsen | Wayne Pelletier | Rick Drageland | Mo Cote |
| <u>Greeters</u> | Steve Applebee & James Breslin | Adolph Galonski & Sharon Klipp | Gail Maestas & Dorothy McAllister | Rick & Marie Kubuck |
| <u>Altar Care</u> | Amber Akers | Sharon Conover | Amanda Goldsmith | Amy Ouellette |
| <u>Flowers</u> | Avis Grant | Avis Grant | Steve & Lydia Bendas | Steve & Lydia Bendas |
| <u>Fellowship</u> | Open | The MacPhersons | Open | Open |

Altar Care for All Saints Day, Nov. 1: Avis Grant

Defending the Faith.

Sometimes the best defense is a good defense.

When talking with atheists (or even Christians going through a period of doubt), a helpful approach might be to look at the facts surrounding Jesus' life, death and resurrection that even His critics agree on. This comes from the PhD dissertation of Dr. Gary Habermas, a Christian theologian and scholar. (Search the web for: "Habermas" "minimal facts" for source data)

Note that this approach doesn't use the Bible at all. That's something that will give skeptics one less thing to attack, which is important because many don't believe Scripture is anything more than fiction written by misinformed ancient people.

Rather, these points come from sources outside of the Bible, including ancient writings from authors like Josephus, Tacitus, Pliny the Younger – all non-Christians and many openly hostile to Christianity.

In order to be considered a "minimal fact", Dr. Habermas set the following requirements:

Each event had to be established by more than adequate scholarly evidence, and usually by several critically-ascertained, independent lines of argumentation.

Additionally, the vast majority of contemporary scholars in relevant fields had to acknowledge the historicity of the occurrence.

So here are the minimal facts that Dr. Habermas cites:

1. Jesus died by crucifixion.
2. Very soon afterward, his followers had real experiences that they thought were actual appearances of the risen Jesus.
3. that their lives were *transformed* as a result, even to the point of being willing to die specifically for their faith in the resurrection message.
4. that these things were *taught very early*, soon after the crucifixion.
5. that *James*, Jesus' unbelieving brother, became a Christian due to his own experience that he thought was the resurrected Christ.
6. that the Christian persecutor *Paul* (formerly Saul of Tarsus) also became a believer after a similar experience.

With only this set of facts, we can support a quite a lot of the Christian story – and even the critics agree on them.

These are all pretty standard teaching in any Christian church, but the last one – the conversion of Saul – is one that is especially interesting to me.

Saul was very highly placed in the society of the time. He was both a Pharisee and a Roman citizen. His citizenship was by birth, rather than by buying it as was common at the time.

It's hard to find a comparison in our current society, but my best guess is that he would have been held in the same esteem as a Supreme Court Justice in his day.

Before he started his travels to Damascus, he sought and been given letters (imparting both power and authority) from the High Priest, empowering him to search out and arrest any followers of The Way (Christians) and take them back to Jerusalem for imprisonment.

Suddenly, (Acts 9: 3-6), Saul encounters the risen Christ, and his life is completely changed in an instant. He voluntarily goes from his position of great power and respect to becoming one of the hunted – one of the very same people that he had been on the way to arrest and imprison *just moments before*.

You (and your atheist friend) have to ask why he would do that. Why would someone give up everything society has to offer and throw it away, just to become a criminal? A parallel might be a Supreme Court Justice robbing convenience stores at gunpoint. It just doesn't make any sense.

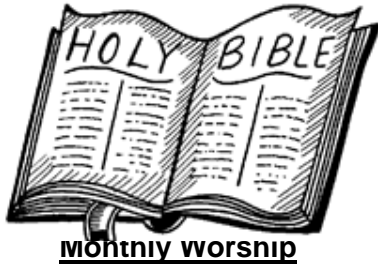
It doesn't make any sense *unless, as Acts 9 reports, Saul really did encounter the risen Christ*. Only then does it snap into clear focus.

Saul who was transformed by Jesus into the Apostle Paul served as one of the great evangelists and writers of Sacred Scripture – and for that, we thank God!

That's a strong piece of evidence to keep in mind when talking with others about our faith.

As always, I'm open for comments, suggestions and especially criticism at charles.j.macpherson@gmail.com.

SDG, Charlie MacPherson



November 1
All Saints' Day

Psalm: 33:1
First Reading: Revelation 7:2-17
Epistle: 1 John 3:1-3
Holy Gospel: Matthew 5:1-12

November 5
Twenty-Second Sunday after Trinity

Psalm: 130:1-2a
Old Testament: Micah 6:6-8
Epistle: Philippians 1:3-11
Holy Gospel: Matthew 18:23-35

November 12
Twenty-Third Sunday after Trinity

Psalm: 85:1
Old Testament: Proverbs 8:11-22
Epistle: Philippians 3:17-21
Holy Gospel: Matthew 22:15-21

November 19
Second Last Sunday of the Church Year

Psalm: 54:5
Old Testament: Daniel 7:9-14
Epistle: 2 Peter 3:3-14
Holy Gospel: Matthew 25:31-46

November 26
Last Sunday of the Church Year

Psalm: 85:1
Old Testament: Isaiah 65:17-25
Epistle: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11
Holy Gospel: Matthew 25:1-13

BIBLE QUIZ

1. Who laid his hands on Saul/Paul to restore his sight?
 - A. Peter
 - B. Ananias
 - C. John
 - D. Barnabas
2. How many child(ren) did Keturah bear for Abraham?
 - A. 1
 - B. 2
 - C. 3
 - D. 6
3. The demons leaving the demon-possessed man from the region of Gerasenes, went into how many pigs?
 - A. 300
 - B. 500
 - C. 1000
 - D. 2000
4. With whom was Sherebiah brought to Ezra?
 - A. His kinsmen
 - B. His servants
 - C. His sons and kinsmen
 - D. His brothers
5. What does Song of Solomon says spoil the vineyards?
 - A. Large animals
 - B. Pests
 - C. Locust
 - D. Little foxes
6. What happened to the manna which was kept for the following day (except on the Sabbath)?
 - A. It withered away and blighted
 - B. It bred worms and stank
 - C. It vanished into thin air
 - D. It grew legs and ran away
7. How often could the high priest enter the Most Holy Place?
 - A. Once a day
 - B. Once a month
 - C. Once a year
 - D. Anytime



11/1 Mia Fitzpatrick
 11/6 Avis Grant
 Gail Maestas
 11/13 Fernando Gouvea
 11/16 Hayley Farr
 11/21 Jessie Shaw
 11/22 Eleanor Keefe
 11/23 Peter Doran
 David Leigh
 11/29 Rick Drageland



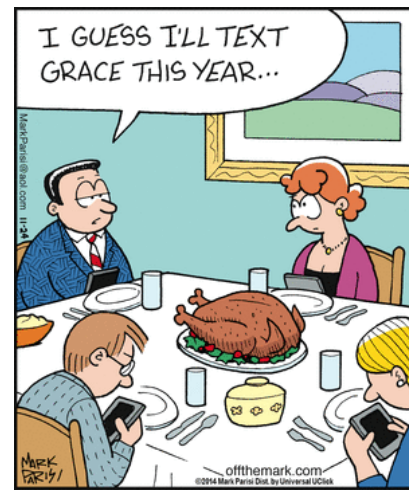
11/18 Adolph Galonski
 11/27 Corina Wilson
 11/?? Krista Carlson
 Sarah Kohl



11/23 Dan & Beck Keefe



11/14 Sharon Conover
 Mike Hein
 11/26 Tyler Wilson



Dentist's Hymn: "Crown Him With Many Crowns"
 Contractor's Hymn: "The Church's One Foundation"
 Baker's Hymn: "I Need Thee Every Hour"
 Weatherman's Hymn: "There Shall Be Showers of Blessings"
 Ophthalmologist's Hymn: "Open My Eyes That I Might See"
 Tailor's Hymn: "Holy, Holy, Holy"
 IRS Hymn: "All To Thee"
 Shopper's Hymn: "By and By"
 Teacher's Hymn: "Be Still and Know"

Terri asked her Sunday School class to draw pictures of their favorite bible stories. She was puzzled by Kyle's picture, which showed four people on an airplane. So, she asked him which story it was meant to represent.

"The flight to Egypt," said Kyle.

"I see... And that must be Mary, Joseph, and the Baby Jesus," Ms. Terri said. "But who's the fourth person?"

Kyle explained, "Oh, that's Pontius the Pilot!"

The Sunday School Teacher asked, "Now, Johnny, tell me frankly, do you say prayers before eating?"

"No sir," little Johnny replies, "I don't have to – my Mom is a good cook!"

BIBLE QUIZ ANSWERS

1. B. (*Acts 9:17*)
2. D. (*Genesis 25:1-2*)
3. D. (*Mark 5:13*)
4. C. (*Ezra 8:18*)
5. D. (*Song of Solomon 2:15*)
6. B. (*Exodus 16:19-20*)
7. C. (*Hebrews 9:6-7*)