

The Lutheran Church of the Resurrection

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May 13, 2015

Dear Tom and Katie regarding Megan,

In His great mercy, God has called us out of darkness and into His marvelous light by the Holy Spirit. If it were not for His gracious and effective call, we would be lost forever, because we would never know that we were lost or to Whom we must go to be saved. But the Holy Spirit has called us by the gospel, the 'good news' of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and raised FOR YOU.

The Holy Spirit brings us into Jesus Christ one person at a time through Holy Baptism. In this 'once-in-a-lifetime' sacrament, God brings us of darkness and into the 'light of the world' – Jesus Christ. Here is where real life begins, regardless of age. But we are not capable of remaining in this new life apart from the continued care and protection of the Holy Spirit. We are only children, regardless of age, and we cannot stand against the temptations and distractions that surround us. On our own, we will inevitably drift away and even reject the grace of God that has been given to us. Apart from His continual care, we will not grow up and mature in this new life.

So, the Holy Spirit continues to nurture and care for His children all through our life. And once again, He does so through the gospel, the 'good news' of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and raised FOR YOU. The Spirit continues to protect and strengthen and guide us in this one true faith through the preaching and teaching of the gospel as well as by the Lord's Supper. Apart from these 'means of grace,' we would quickly go astray, because we are all like sheep.

For some time now, I have been discussing with the Elders and Deaconess our traditional practice of withholding the Lord's Supper from children until they have completed the confirmation program and participated in the Rite of Confirmation which usually happens around 8th grade or 13 years old. We have done a lot of reading and studying of the Scriptures and various writings from others who are doing the same kind of thinking.

The conclusion that we have come to is that the connection of the Rite of Confirmation to reception of the Lord's Supper is neither commanded by Scripture nor has it been the historic practice of the Lutheran Church from its beginning. The Confirmation program is very important and vital to a mature and solid faith. But we can see good reasons for uncoupling the reception of the Lord's Supper from Confirmation and offering Holy Communion at an earlier age. Instruction is necessary for proper reception of this sacrament, but not the extent of instruction that Confirmation Class entails.

So, we would like to offer children in 5th grade or 10 years old the opportunity to begin to receive the Lord's Supper. We have identified what we think is a good tool for parents to use to instruct their children at home, which is really where this instruction should take place. I and Deaconess Conover are ready to equip parents for this important work.

So the next step is for us to meet together to talk about how this might work. We're hoping that Wednesday evening, May 27th at 6:30pm. at church will work for everyone. Please let me know if you are interested in this for Megan and if the time and date will work for you.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Nielsen