

# Good News of Peace

August 2015 A.D.

A Caring Family ✦ Reaching Out ✦ Sharing Christ's Love ✦ Teaching God's Word!

## From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Friends in Christ,

I don't know where to begin.

As I returned to the office today after a couple of weeks away, it was difficult to know exactly where to begin. When I left following the service on July 12, my desk was full. When I returned today, needless to say, it was even fuller: phone calls to return, mail (of both the postal and electronic variety) to sort through, a multitude of tasks to complete.

Before I continue, I should mention, I suppose, that we had a good trip. Very good, actually. We put a lot of miles on the vehicle we rented in the process of visiting a total of 10 states and seven national parks. And while we spent way too much time in the car, it was a treat to share a big chunk of our beautiful and remarkable country with our children, from the ocean to the mountains to the plains and back to the good old Midwest and the Great Lakes. However, after traversing half of those 10 states on the final three days of the trip, including five (counting Michigan) on the final full day, we were very glad to be back in Rogers City.

As I returned to the office, however, I will admit that it was difficult to know what I should do first. After spending the day today trying to get caught up as best I could, that decision will be made for me the rest of this week by, among other things, the three baptisms and the wedding that are on the calendar over the next four days. Together with the four baptisms conducted earlier this month, by the way, that will make a total of seven baptisms in the span of three weeks! Thanks and praise be to God for that!

While I rejoice in the privilege of being a part of such joyous events in the lives of our members, I do not rejoice in the recent news about Planned Parenthood. During our two weeks away, I had only briefly glimpsed a couple of headlines. On my list of tasks for today was getting caught up in this department, as well. Having done so, at least briefly, I will say once again that I really don't know where to begin. If you have heard or read the stories, you will understand when I say that I wish that I had been able to remain ignorant. In case you haven't heard or read the stories, however, I felt that it would be appropriate to utilize some of my space this month to

share two recent statements regarding the subject on the part of our Synod's leaders.

If you are interested in reading more on this subject, please visit our Synod's web site at [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org) for all sorts of additional articles, resources, and links. I will also place a few copies of a couple of these resources in the narthex.

Finally, please join me in continuing to pray fervently for our nation and its leaders. Lord, have mercy upon us all!

In His Service,

Pastor Derek Riddle

## Harrison on Planned Parenthood controversy: 'God is not silent'

By Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison

*"It is the deadly hatred with which Satan attacks Christ. It is the thirst for a vengeance against Christ, which Satan cannot satisfy. It is the anxiety before Christ the judge. It is the rage of the fatally wounded beast."* — Rev. Hermann Sasse's sermon on the Fourth Sunday after Trinity, 1942

Tuesday morning, the Center for Medical Progress released another video exposing Planned Parenthood and the evil and immense pain that occur inside its clinics. The video is graphic. Little arms and legs are ripped from tiny bodies. They are callously referred to as "specimens," sold at a price.

Jesus warned us about this. He reminded us that the devil would be hard at work, seeking to devour hearts and minds. He told us the world would try to silence His Word of life, and that His truth would be shunned. Satan will stop at nothing to rage at Christ, even if it means murdering the tiniest of people and selling their bodies for profit.

But God is not silent. He has a word for us, too. He comforts us in the knowledge that the devil's attempts are desperate and futile, for Jesus came to save people, regardless of their size. He reminds us that He has "overcome the world" (John 16:33) and "came that [we] may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10). His point? Satan is fighting a losing battle, and he knows it.

So also, we pray, is Planned Parenthood. Its leadership can make excuses and attempt to justify its actions, complain that the videos are edited or that the Center for Medical Progress isn't a legitimate organization. The chatter doesn't matter. In Christ, the tide has already

turned. God is not silent. He will not allow Satan to prevail.

Even now, He is causing young people to rise up, no longer content to let this genocide continue. His Church is standing up, too, as congregations and individuals show mercy to those who suffer the emotional pain of an abortion and come alongside moms and babies in financial and spiritual need. LCMS Life Ministry carries on its joyful work as well, supporting crisis pregnancy centers, providing educational life materials, teaching youth about chastity and working closely with our friends at Lutherans For Life and the National Pro-Life Religious Council.

Satan will roar for a time, but his evil, murderous ways won't last. Sasse reminds us, "Before the power of Jesus the unbridled power of Satan has to stop," for Jesus "takes the dominion of the world away from Satan.

"Satan cannot overpower us," Sasse continues. "He cannot stand before this Lord Jesus. That's why he rages." Be comforted. Pray boldly. Speak bravely. Defend life. Act courageously. Let your frustration and disgust be turned to prayer and action on behalf of our littlest neighbors, for Satan cannot win, and God is not silent.

The Rev. Dr. Matthew C. Harrison is president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

## **LCMS denounces Planned Parenthood**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

We logged on to the Internet and Facebook yesterday only to be hit with a sickening story: undercover video footage seemingly implicating Planned Parenthood in the sale of the body parts of aborted children.

In the video, Planned Parenthood Federation of America's Senior Director of Medical Services, Dr. Deborah Nucatola, discusses how she adjusts abortion procedures to procure certain parts of a child's body, even as she notes that "we've been very good at getting heart, lung, liver."

Listen long enough, if you can handle it, and you'll hear her suggest that such items could eventually be listed on a Planned Parenthood "menu" for affiliate organizations to purchase for a price.

Later in the day, Planned Parenthood released a "nothing to see here" kind of statement, asserting that the discussion was merely one revolving around a patient's right to donate tissue, as with any medical procedure. But why does Nucatola then mention the costs of body parts ("Thirty to one hundred dollars," she says)?

Lord, have mercy.

If what Nucatola says is, in fact, the truth, we as Christians cannot allow this story to go untold or be buried by the media. We simply cannot remain silent

while the reprehensible act of killing a child in the womb is made even worse by selling portions of that child's dismembered body simply because there is a market for them.

Speaking up about the shameful act of killing children — as well as harvesting their body parts — may be uncomfortable. We may lose friends and create awkward tension at work. Our professors may mock us, and our family may roll their eyes at us. If that is the case, so be it. Because as Lutherans, as Christians, we are for life, no matter the cost.

As Lutherans, we confess that every life has value, that it has worth, that it matters ... from the moment of conception until natural death occurs. We confess that what Nucatola calls "17-weekers" are actually children — with beating hearts and little moving fingers and toes.

We confess that even the tiniest of humans are just that — regardless of what scientific term the culture uses to make them seem like something less. We confess that they are created in the image and likeness of our Lord Himself. And we confess that because of Him, their hearts and lungs and livers matter, no matter how small they might be.

We also admit our own failings in this regard. Where we have failed to speak and act for life, we repent. Where we have not cared for mothers in crisis-pregnancy situations, we ask for forgiveness. Where we have thought more of ourselves than giving to an organization that can assist those moms and babies, we are sorry. Where we have been apathetic to this pandemic of death, we grieve.

But we are not without hope, because our Lord is for life too.

He is so pro-life, in fact, that He has given His own life for us, even as He has laid it down for these tiniest of children. Where their short lives are taken, He offers up His willingly. Where their little bodies are sold, He gives His freely to us at His holy table for the forgiveness of our sins.

Today let us confess life with renewed vigor — to our friends over supper, through letters to the editor of our local paper, by writing our congressmen, in tweets and emails to Planned Parenthood, on our Facebook pages.

Let us pray that our Lord would bring an end to abortion altogether and that He would stop the horrible sale of infant bodies.

And let us pray that He would forgive us, renew us and bolster us to make a good confession in season and out of season: one that is always, no matter what, for life.

**Rev. Bart Day, executive director**  
Life and Health Ministries, LCMS Office of National Mission

## Summer Bible Study

Before taking a break for the month of July, our Summer Wednesday Evening Bible Study completed its first three sessions in June: (1) the "Credentials" of Christianity, (2) the Far Eastern Religions (including Hinduism and Buddhism), and (3) the Middle Eastern Religions (including especially Judaism). We will resume this month according to the following tentative schedule:

Sessions 4-5: Islam - August 5

Session 6: Western Religions 1 (Mormons & Jehovah's Witnesses) - August 12

Session 7: Western Religions 2 (the Cults & Scientology) - August 19

Conclusion: A Christian Response - August 26

This study is a DVD-based series with Dr. Paul Maier, which takes a look at various world religions, what they teach, and how they compare to Christianity. Each session of this study is a stand-alone session, which means that members should feel free to come and go as you are able.

## Back-to-School Night

This event has received such a positive response from both the congregation and the community the last two years that we would very much like to keep it going this year. If you are interested in helping to coordinate this year's event, have suggestions for how we might improve upon it, or are interested in making a contribution, please see Pastor ASAP. This year's event will take place on the evening of Tuesday, August 25. Please note the date change. Because school is starting a little bit later this year, we have decided to move the event back one week.

Help will be needed in the following areas: serving as a presenter or suggestions for potential presenters and/or presentation topics; contacting local businesses for potential donations of school supplies; coordinating the receipt of donations; donations of school supplies (see below); providing volunteer assistance during the event (a sign-up sheet will be made available as the date draws nearer); and publicity for the event (both in print and via social media).

Donations are also being sought for Back-to-School Night. The cost of school supplies can be a burden to many families, and one of the goals of this event is to serve them in Jesus' name by helping to ease that cost while asking nothing in return. Please see the lists available in the narthex for the specific supplies being collected. Donations may be returned to the church any time and placed in the designated location in the narthex.

## Pictorial Directory

Thanks to everyone who participated in the photography sessions at the end of June for our new pictorial directory. Overall, we received a very positive congregational response. For those who were unable to make it, we are hoping to schedule a make-up session within the next few weeks and will announce the date as soon as it has been set.

## Michigan District Convention

The 101st Michigan District Convention took place June 28-30 on the campus of Concordia University Ann Arbor, under the theme "Imagine: Living as God's Loved and Compassionate Community." Pastor Riddle attended as our pastoral delegate and David Schaedig as our lay delegate. Rev. Dr. David Maier was re-elected as the District President, and Rev. Mark Brandt of Frankenmuth was re-elected as the Vice-President of the North and East Region and the First Vice-President of the District. Other Convention highlights and news are available at the Michigan District's web site at [www.michigandistrict.org](http://www.michigandistrict.org), as well as on the Michigan District's Facebook page (Michigan District of the LCMS).

## The Lutheran Hour

The Lutheran Hour can be heard locally on Sunday mornings at 7:00 a.m. on 92.5 FM and at 11:00 a.m. on 1450 AM. You can also listen on-line or via podcast at [www.lutheranhour.org](http://www.lutheranhour.org). Now you can also download the new Lutheran Hour Mobile App to your mobile device. Instructions for doing so can be found at [www.lhm.org/apps/](http://www.lhm.org/apps/).

### August 2015 Schedule:

#### **August 2**

"What is Truth?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
Flawed human reason has lost sight of God's divine Truth.  
(John 18:38)

#### **August 9**

"What do You Think of Christ?"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
Everyone seems to have an opinion about Jesus; however, faith is what counts.  
(Matthew 22:41-43)

#### **August 16**

"The Inevitable Question"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz  
Pontius Pilate asks the question each of us must answer:  
"What shall I do with Jesus?"  
(Matthew 27:22)

### August 23

"Faith Faces the Future"

Lutheran Hour Speaker: Rev. Gregory Seltz

"If God be for us, who can be against us?"

(Romans 8:31)

### August 30

"The Truth"

Speaker Emeritus of The Lutheran Hour: Rev. Ken Klaus

God's saving truth reaches out to a world steeped in lies.

(1 John 1:1-3)

## Stewardship Corner

*Busyness is the new black. It stylish. We spend an inordinate amount of time comparing how busy we are with everyone else. We compare our schedules, our kid schedules, how productive we are and how much we have because of it to everyone around us. And if we don't do or have what the next guy does or has, we just get busier and produce more so that we can.*

*This consumes our conversations and thoughts. And this should give us pause: Who is consuming whom, here? Are we the consumer or are we those consumed? It is no accident that our adversary the devil is described as a lion prowling around seeking to devour us, to consume us. He gives us the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. For if he can keep us busy in "muchness" and "manyness," he can be satisfied.*

*And this is why the Lord, after finishing all His work of creation, rested on the seventh day. This is why He established the Sabbath day—to give His people rest from all their work. As they rested, He continued to work for them, to satisfy them, to fill them with His gifts—food from heaven by His Word and Promise.*

*That day came when from our Lord's cross and in His death, He proclaimed, "It is finished" (John 19:30). And so His work of redemption was complete. And so His body rested in the tomb, the belly of the earth. Though He is the Lord God who always works, yet as the Lord rested on the original Sabbath, now Jesus kept the Sabbath by resting in the tomb and rising from the dead to live forever. For this is why He came. This is why He became man: to draw all to Himself so that He could give rest and refreshment to the weary and the heavy laden.*

*The Sabbath is a gift, not a burden. It is a gift of time free from the liturgy of this world, the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Sabbath is time for rest and refreshment, a time free from anxiety to enjoy the gifts God gives, all of them— His Word, His Promises, His Sacraments, His creation, everything. It is a foretaste of the rest we shall enjoy in heaven.*

*Sadly for many of us rest has become work. It become drudgery. We long for it but we aren't able to do it because there is so much to be done and so little time to do it. But really what is the rush? Why are we so hurried and harried? Have we forgotten that Jesus is raised from the dead and lives forever?*

*Sabbath is God's gift of time free from all of the anxiety and hurry of this world so that we can rest, be refreshed by the gifts God gives. Society won't do it for us. They are addicted to the liturgy of productivity and consumption. Though we are in the world, we are not of it. We are the people of God, His own children by water and Word, joined to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus lives. And so shall we. So rest in the promise of our Savior that sin, death, and time have not hold on you because Jesus is raised from the dead. Jesus lives. And so shall we, forever.*

Taken from [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org)

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