



/ OCTOBER 2017

MID-SOUTH LUTHERAN



LCMS/Erin M. Lunsford

believe the Bible to be God's inspired, inerrant, authoritative Word. It's the source and norm of all matters of faith and practice. We believe the historical accuracy of Scripture in all accounts. What Scripture says is inspired by God, given to men chosen by God to be recorded for us and all generations. The Bible doesn't need our defense or apology. It stands on its own authority. St Paul wrote:

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

2 TIM. 3:16-17

As a result, preaching God's Word is a challenge. Modernized worship has inclined to become man's action toward God, rather than worship when God comes to us in His divine service. He leads us and strengthens us in faith, pronounces His forgiveness of sins and makes us wise unto salvation by His Word and sacraments. Too many "worship" venues have nothing to do with the doctrines of Holy Scripture. God's worth is not dependent on what sinful mankind can contribute, bring or announce to Him. He isn't God because we say so. He's God eternal beyond our human comprehension.

Biblical doctrine cannot take second place to music or worship styles. That's not only upside down, but idolatrous. God's Spirit is the One who builds the church — not music, style or anything we think we have to add to His work. The Spirit alone builds the Church when He leads us in faith to embrace the Gospel revealed in Holy Scripture. What is revealed in Scripture is *Sola*

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Our LCMS

'An oasis of Christianity'

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD AND THE MID-SOUTH DISTRICT stand on the strength and foundation of Holy Scripture and our Lutheran Confessions.

We're a veritable oasis of Christianity, surrounded by a desert of confusing and conflicting doctrines. Without the centrality of our confessions, the Lutheran Church would not have grown from a few dozen German families in 1517 to the more than 2.3 million souls Synod-wide and millions of Lutherans around the world. Martin Luther's rediscovery by God's



Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola
District President

grace brings to our communities and the world in the doctrines we embrace the three *solas* — *Sola Scriptura*, *Sola Fides*, *Sola Gratia* — which mean we're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, revealed in Scripture alone, and we may add *Sola Christus* — in Christ alone.

The Reformation anniversary around our Lutheran Confessions may not send a chill down the spine or give us a shot of adrenalin. Yet our Confessions are all the centrality of God's Word! Scripture is the sole basis of all our doctrines and confessions. We will stand corrected only if we are shown to be in error against Holy Scripture. Our complete subscription to Holy Scripture will not be changed by human reason and interpretation.

Unpack these principles. Consider *Sola Scriptura* — on Scripture alone. We

Christus — Christ alone. But some churches have adopted activities that belong on Madison Avenue. When secularization takes over the style and direction of the Church, there's a chance of loss of the Church's essential values. There's a danger of a loss of absolute values, an introduction of permissive individualism, intuition rather than truth, feelings and experiences instead of faith, chance instead of divine providence and pampered creature-comforts instead of God's pure forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ.

Perhaps this makes us sound stodgy, but it recognizes that many churches today don't talk about sin and forgiveness as it may make people feel bad. Some congregations remove the cross from their sanctuaries because it tells people what sin caused the Son of God to do. What's happened is that instead of pure biblical Law and Gospel, they want people to feel good about themselves rather than embrace that they are a child chosen by God by His grace. But without God's Law, we'd be blinded from our need for a Savior. The vocabulary of faith and grace is shallow without the Law that points out our sin. The doctrines of grace, forgiveness, redemption from death, the atoning sacrifice of Christ and justification by His resurrection from the dead cannot be supplanted by prosperity theology, social justice or something we can claim on our own merits.

The cross of Christ is the center of all time. His work on the cross for us is pivotal to our history and theology. If He did not die for our sins on the cross, if He did not rise from the dead in living flesh, if He did not win God's satisfaction ... then we're dead.

Martin Luther wrote:

"Since all of us, born in sin and God's enemies, have earned nothing but eternal wrath and hell, so that everything we are and can do is damned, and there is no help or way of getting out of this predicament on our own. Therefore, another Man had to step into our place, namely, Jesus Christ, God and Man, and had to render satisfaction and make payment for sin through His suffering and death."

Salvation came *Sola Gratia* — by grace



LCMS/Erik M. Lunsford

alone. Sinners can't find Him, can't come to Him, can't buy Him and can't help Him when it comes to salvation. Sin by nature is exactly what we do and what we are. The Bible says:

"All, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: 'None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God.'" **ROM. 3:9B-11**

Confidence in human merit is a product of a fallen nature. The doctrine of justification becomes obscured if we think we have to (or can even help God) supplement our salvation, or deserve it on our merits. God's grace alone saves us, brings us to Christ and releases us from sin. God gives us His means to nourish by His Word and Sacraments that raise us from death to life. God created us because of His love for us. He's not egocentric! He doesn't need us to tell Him how awesome and powerful He is ... He already knows it! We praise Him because He calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies us out of His love. By His grace, for the sake of His Son, God redeems us and brings us peace with Him now and for eternity.

We receive this grace *Sola Fide* — by faith alone. Luther said the doctrine of justification is the doctrine upon which the Church will rise or fall. If a church doesn't purely preach the article of justification, they cease to be Christian. St Paul writes:

"But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from

the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it—the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe."

ROM. 3:21-22

Faith is not intellectual knowledge. Holy Scripture says the devil believes yet shudders in terror because he knows who finally wins this battle. Faith embraces the truth that God's entire creation and our certainty of where we will live in eternity depends on us being saved by God's grace alone, through faith alone, as revealed by Scripture alone.

In these principles, we celebrate the anniversary of the Reformation. We embrace our Lutheran Confessions founded on the solid foundation of Holy Scripture, celebrating our historic Reformation. With these parting words from St Paul:

"Oh, the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?' 'Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen." **ROM. 11:33-36**

May God guide our lives that we truly embrace and ever hold fast to these principles of our Christian faith — not only for this Reformation anniversary, but for every day of our life here on earth.

Growing in discipleship

Each One, Reach One sessions continue

The Mid-South District has been hosting *Every One His Witness* workshops, conducted by the Rev. Dr. Mark Wood, executive director of LCMS Witness & Outreach Ministry. The *Every One His Witness* Lutheran evangelism program puts sound doctrine into practical action for sharing the faith with people in our everyday lives.

Top, seven congregations were represented at a workshop Saturday, Aug. 12, at Shepherd of the Hills, Crossville, Tenn. Below, an earlier Each One, Reach One session was hosted at Christ the King, Memphis, on July 29.

Watch for the program to become available to congregations soon on a CD.



GOD CAN USE ANYBODY



Katie Luther — a 16th century woman on a mission!

By Julie Keck
Media/Marketing
LWML Mid-South District

October 2017 is finally here! We Lutherans have been looking forward to the 500th anniversary of the Reformation for at least a couple of years.

I know I started to think about it when I went to Wittenberg, Germany, in 2015 and got to see all the Luther sites, and all the scaffolding and sprucing up that was happening to the Castle Church and the "95 Theses" door.

I have learned a lot about Martin Luther and the Reformation since that wonderful trip and during the anticipation of October 2017. As I ponder Luther's life and the Reformation, one principle really becomes clear to me: God can use anybody!



Have you thought about how God can use you to further His kingdom? Have you offered yourself, your life for His work? One great way to support God's mission is through the work we do in the Lutheran Woman's Missionary League (LWML).

You can learn more about what God wants for your life through personal or group Bible study. You can support LWML district and national missions by collecting mites. You can use your time and talents when you work on local ministries. You can pray for God's missions and missionaries around the world.

Are you a Lutheran Woman in Mission? There is something for you to do! For ideas, join your local LWML society or go to lwml.org/get-involved.

Congregation mission commitment receipts as of July 31, 2017 (7 months)

Anticipated amount (58.33% of budget)	\$917,667
Actual receipts	\$904,494
Over (under) anticipated amount..	(\$13,173)

Use of mission commitment receipts

Allocated to Synod for world missions	\$256,765
Allocated to Tanzania	\$14,583
Retained for district ministry/mission support (70% of receipts)	\$633,146
Total receipts	\$904,494

Mission commitment receipts comparison

Actual receipts as of July 31, 2017	\$904,494
Actual receipts as of July 31, 2016	\$917,575
Over (under) prior year receipts(\$13,081)

Happy 85!

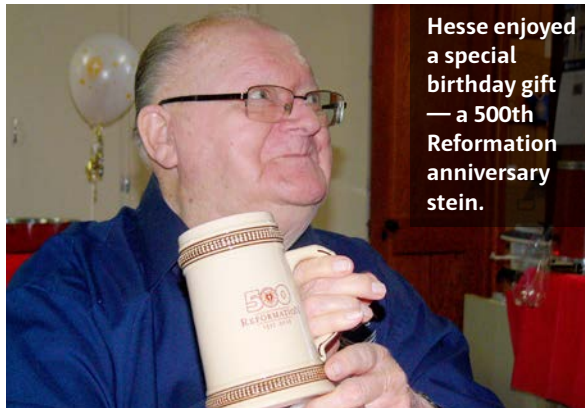
By Rev. Timothy J. Henning
Vacancy Pastor, Trinity, Mena, Ark.

The Rev. Donley Hesse, emeritus, who served Trinity as pastor from 1994 to 2009, celebrated his 85th birthday on June 25 and also the 60th anniversary of his ordination on July 14. A service of thanksgiving and praise was held on June 25, with Hesse's children, Rachel, Sara, Tim and Jonathan and his sister, Daphne, in attendance. A reception followed in his honor.

Hesse was born in a little red farm house with one stained glass window on June 25, 1932, near Grygla, Minn., and spent his first eight years of schooling in a one-room schoolhouse.

He then enrolled at Concordia College in St. Paul — a six-year academy modeled after the German system of professional training — and graduated from the ministerial course.

During the third year of his training at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Hesse served his vicarage in Stanley, N.D.,



Hesse enjoyed a special birthday gift — a 500th Reformation anniversary stein.

Neb., Ormsby, Minn., and Gordon, Neb. He and Lois became proud parents of twin daughters and two sons.

Hesse also served congregations in Lyons, Neb., Sioux Falls and Marion, S.D., before moving to Mena in 1994. He served as pastor of Trinity for 15 years before retiring in 2009.

where he unexpectedly “inherited” three congregations when his supervising pastor accepted a call elsewhere.

In the spring of 1957, following his graduation from seminary, he was called to serve at Calvary, Rosemont, Neb., and in 1960, he married Lois, whom he met when she was a guest at one of the weddings in which he had officiated.

Lois was fond of explaining, “Instead of catching the bouquet, I caught the minister who performed the wedding!”

Between 1961 and 1971, Hesse accepted calls to serve congregations in Wymore,

He remains an active and faithful member of the Trinity congregation and is also active at the Mena Senior Center. He continues to refresh his theological training by writing the nouns and verbs of Scriptural references in either Hebrew or Greek, while participating in a two-year program of reading a German Bible from Genesis to Revelation, while others in the congregation complete the program in English.

Many thanks and blessings to Hesse for his 60 years of dedicated service and guidance while doing the Lord's work.

"Have courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; and when you have laboriously accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake."

— Victor Hugo



Joy abounds at Trinity, Mena, where new members have been received through transfer. From left are Paul and Vickie Krehmeyer and their grandson, Justin Dowlen, and the Rev. Timothy Henning, vacancy pastor, at a reception in the fellowship hall on July 9.

Installations

The Rev. Travis Ferguson was installed as associate pastor of Grace, Knoxville. The July 30 installation was attended by, from left (front row) Rev. Bill Couch; Ferguson; Rev. John Schulz; (second row) Will Haynes, crucifer; Rev. Robert Portier, St. Paul, Sevierville; Rev. Linsey Dettmer, St. Paul, Sevierville; Rev. Louis Trebus, Celebration, Seymour, Tenn.; Rev. David Graves, St. Paul, Wartburg; Bruce Collet, certified lay minister; Eli Roth, acolyte; (third row) the Revs. Derek Roberts, Praise, Maryville, Tenn.; Philip Bohlken; Adam Woldt, The Point, Knoxville; Rich Elseroad, Grace, Knoxville; Stephen Skov, Rockwood, Tenn.; Paul Kritsch, Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Sharps Chapel, Tenn; and Michael Miller, Redeemer, Harriman, Tenn.



The Rev. Eric Rudenske, who was recently ordained, was installed as pastor of Concordia, Jackson, Tenn., on July 23. Attending were from left, (front row) Rev. Mark Goble, circuit visitor; Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, district president; Rudenske; Rev. Chuck Neugebauer, regional vice-president; Rev. Bill Stevenson, Trinity, Dyersburg; (back row) Jeremy McDonald (representing Grace, Munford, Tenn.); Rev. Dr. Jim Holowach, Christ, Jackson, Miss., (Rudenske's home congregation); Rev. Dr. Terry Tieman, Transforming Churches Network (TCN); Rev. Rob Harbin, Faith, Collierville; and Jerry Stobaugh, representing Holy Spirit, Oakland, Tenn.



Three pastors who have served at Heavenly Host, Cookville, Tenn., came together to celebrate **the ordination of Rev. Thomas Presley at Grace, Huntsville, Ala.,** on Aug. 13. From left are Rev. Dr. Roger Paavola, district president; Presley; and Rev. Andrew Smith, pastor of Heavenly Host.

CTK family grows

After six weeks of intense study led by its pastors, Christ the King, Memphis, welcomed a class of new members in July. After being officially accepted into membership, they were introduced to the congregation and, following the service, they were guests of honor in a reception in CTK's Fellowship Hall. For more information on Christ the King's next new member class, call the church office at 901-682-8404.





Building fund grows!

During the Aug. 6 worship service, the Rev. Paul Kritsch, pastor of **Chapel of the Good Shepherd, Sharps Chapel, Tenn.**, announced that the church's Norris Shores property has been sold and as a result, the church's building fund more than doubled. The congregation broke into applause and stood to sing "Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow."

"Our congregation has been truly blessed by generous people," Kritsch said. "Wendy and Gary Krueger, who donated the property which was sold; Dawn and Bill Protzer, who donated the land on Sharps Chapel Road on which our first

Chapel of the Good Shepherd's workers are much appreciated: (from left) Cindy Garretson, treasurer; Jane Bruns, secretary; Jeff Landis, president; the Rev. Paul Kritsch; Margo McCaffery, realtor; and Tom McCaffery, vice-president.

church building will be built; and Margo McCaffery, who is a church member and realtor who worked so hard to make the sale of the land a reality, are all examples of the people whom the Lord is gathering as our church."

The congregation is confident that at God's timing, its first building will become a reality. Worship services are currently held each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. in the Community Center at 1542 Sharps Chapel Road. A weekly neighborhood Bible breakfast group meets each Tuesday at 9 a.m., also in the Community Center.

The church actively seeks to support its community through the gathering of diapers and baby food, which are shared through the Union County Food Bank; an annual children's coat giveaway, this year on Oct. 21; the gathering of paper products to be given out during the Dec. 9 Union County Charities Giveaway; and by working at the monthly Second Harvest food distribution at Upper Room Ministries in New Tazewell.

On Sept. 15, the congregation hosted its third annual Patriot Day Dinner that honored the Sheriff's Department, Station 51 Volunteer Fire Department and Ladies Auxiliary, the Sharps Chapel Emergency Squad and the local Fire Prevention and Forestry Service.

Faith, Union City, celebrates 50 years

What a blessing to meet and listen to the founding pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Union City, Tenn., on July 30. The Rev. Merlen Wegener remembers starting the congregation in 1966 with 12 interested Lutherans in the area who wished to open a church. Like a miracle, it became 48 and began holding services in a Seventh Day Adventist church building.

The congregation decided to build its own church and bought property across from the historic Union City Coca-Cola bottling plant.

The building was completed in 1968, prior to the arrival of the Goodyear tire company, which assured its growth.

Rev. Wegener served Faith until 1973. He has retired and is currently serving as a guest pastor at Beautiful Savior, Powell, Ohio.



Faith's founding pastor, the Rev. Merlen Wegener (1966-1973) and his wife, Nancy, were delighted to attend the celebration. They remember being young and out of the seminary, and having their children in Union City.

‘Small, but mighty’

Pool party includes free backpacks

By Gretchen Roberts
Praise, Maryville, Tenn.

For the second consecutive year, Praise Lutheran Church, Maryville, Tenn., hosted a Back to School pool party for children and families of the Blount County Foster Parent Association. Dozens of families joined Praise members on July 23 at Springbrook Pool for a night of swimming, fun and receiving brand new backpacks and school supplies to kick off the year.

“We enjoy being directly involved in the gifting work of our God to help area foster children and families who care for them,” the Rev. Derek Roberts said. “The



A group of Praise Lutheran Church volunteers attended the Back to School party to distribute backpacks and pray for the children and families. From left, Gretchen Roberts, Donna Wall, Barbara McGillick, Candace Pettyjohn, Ed McGillick, Rev. Derek Roberts, Kris Smith, Jim Roberts and Chuck Pettyjohn.

children love having new backpacks and school supplies. The families caring for the children are making major sacrifices to help these children at critical times in their lives and we love what they do.”

Praise also sponsors a Christmas drive for the association in December. Members choose a child listed by age and gender and purchase clothing and toys from that child’s wish list. Both

initiatives are led by member Barbara McGillick, who with her husband, Ed, have long been involved in foster programs in several states.

“Our church might be small, but we are mighty,” McGillick says. “You see what the kids go through, you see the heartbreak when it’s a holiday, when it’s a birthday. They’re appreciative of anything, any attention they get, any gift they receive.”

Ministry expanding in Springdale

Salem Lutheran Ministries, Springdale, Ark., represents a multi-ethnic family of faith, comprised of six ministries that work together in partnership to share Christ and His love with the Springdale community and the world. Their growth and the impact of their outreach over the last year was reported in a joyful video celebration on their Facebook page.

The four-minute video indicates progress in all six ministries:

- ▶ Salem Lutheran Church.
- ▶ Iglesia Luterana Cristo Para Todos (“Christ for All Nations”), a Hispanic congregation.
- ▶ Salem Lutheran Preschool.
- ▶ Rock House campus ministry.
- ▶ Project Compassion social ministry.
- ▶ Baltic Mission Society.

It shares the Good News of eight children and two teens baptized into God’s family, three youths confirmed and the development of the Leaders in Training summer-discipleship program for youth.



Salem Lutheran Preschool is in its 38th year of providing education in a Christ-centered environment, while the Rock House Campus Ministry in Fayetteville reaches University of Arkansas students with a weekly meal and discussion.

The church itself has been freshened

with a new visual system, carpet and flooring and a remodeled nursery, while outreach opportunities are amped up by a growing list of activities and special events, such as ESL, VBS, youth soccer, sports in the gym, free oil changes and fall and Easter festivals.

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Fall Fest to celebrate Reformation

By Earl Schrock

Congregation President,
Zion Lutheran Church, Augsburg, Ark.

After nine successful Fall Fests, Zion Lutheran Church, Augsburg, Ark., is doing something different this year. In addition to all of its other attractions, Zion has added a Reformation walk for the Augsburg Fall Fest on Saturday, Oct. 14.

During the walk, participants of all ages will move through stations learning about the Reformation, receiving a sticker as they visit each location on their map. At each of the following stations, visitors will:

- ▶ Make and snack on pretzels.
- ▶ Learn about Luther's 95 Theses.
- ▶ Meet Frederick the Wise.
- ▶ Witness Martin Luther's baptism and meet his parents.
- ▶ Take a crash course in German from Ursula Cotta.
- ▶ See John Tetzel sell indulgences.
- ▶ Meet Martin and Katie and learn about their home life.
- ▶ Create and learn about a daring escape in fish barrels.
- ▶ Sing hymns of praise with the Rev. Reed Shoaff, Zion pastor.
- ▶ Receive a personal copy of Martin Luther's simple explanation of the Christian faith.



An assortment of great food, activities and entertainment will be available at this year's Fall Fest, including popular attractions from previous years like the petting zoo, ball pit and face painting.



The festival will also feature a Reformation bike ride, free kids' games, bump-and-jumps, pony rides, petting zoo, cake walk, silent auction, Daisy BB gun shoot, drawing for grass-fed beef, cow-patty drop, antique-farm equipment display, bingo, crafts and educational booths, all-day musical entertainment and delicious German food. Admission to the festival is free.

The festival begins at 10 a.m. and lasts the whole day. Zion Lutheran Church is located at the intersection of Arkansas Highway 333 and Augsburg Road, north of London and northwest of Dover.

All of the proceeds from the festival are equally divided between Zion's two social outreach ministries — the River Valley Christian Clinic in Dardanelle, which offers free medical, dental and eye services to residents who can't afford them, and the Augsburg Food Pantry, which provides food to 500 to 600 people every month.

Last year, the festival raised almost \$19,000 for these two mission efforts. Come and see what this little congregation atop Augsburg Mountain has done to reach out with Christian love and compassion to its neighbors in need.

SALEM

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

Multi-ethnic activities include the Festival of Nations, Las Posadas (a Christmas tradition from Mexico), a marriage conference and Valentine's Day dinner dance and more.

The video was shown at the church's annual meeting and, "It was a great way to celebrate God's work, celebrate our multi-ethnic identity, and keep the meeting short!" says Rev. Brandon Martin, pastor of Iglesia Luterana Cristo Para Todos and associate pastor, Salem Lutheran Ministries.

Deadline for the December issue is Oct. 15

Digital files, sent via email, are preferred. Email submissions to lw@mid-southlcms.com, or mail via U.S. Postal Service to: **Judy Otto, 150 N. Maury St., Holly Springs, MS 38635**

Our submission deadline is the 15th of each month, two months before publication.

