**The Monthly Newsletter of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church**

**Lindy, Nebraska**

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**The Rod and Staff**



**July 2017**

**A Series on the Lutheran Reformation: Martin Luther’s Translations**

We continue this month of June with our series on the Lutheran Reformation. Because the year 1517 is often taken as the symbolic beginning of this time of Reformation, Lutheran churches in our time recognize the year 2017 as the five hundredth anniversary of this pivotal time in history. Martin Luther and his colleagues in Wittenberg, Germany sought to *reform* the Church of their time by refocusing it on the central message of the faith, which they felt had been obscured by other and unnecessary things. They wanted to refocus the Church on faith in Jesus Christ as savior and our faith in that good news. By placing this faith at the center, they felt that everything else would fall into its proper place.

The time of the Reformation was about a lot more than one person called Martin Luther. Many others contributed to the work, and without their assistance, Luther would not have been successful. In time, I will write more about some of the other significant figures of the Reformation. However, Luther’s life in itself provides a great deal to chew on.

This month, I want to talk about Luther’s writings, specifically his translations. Luther was a prolific writer. It is said that if you count out all of the letters, documents, and translations he composed in his career and average them out over his entire life (including his childhood), Luther wrote on average two documents a week! Kind of like the internet today, the printing press in Luther’s time allowed for documents to be disseminated and ideas to spread much more quickly than in the past. There is a legend that says that Luther, in a time of spiritual and mental depression, thought that the devil had appeared in his room, at which point Luther picked up his inkwell from this desk and threw it at him. This legend is based on a comment he made later in his life: “I have thrown ink at the devil.” What he meant, however, was that he was fighting the work of the devil through the ink put on paper in the form of his letters, catechisms, sermons, treatises, and Bible translations.

One part of Luther’s legacy that is often overlooked is that of his work as a Bible translator. When Luther was held captive for his own safety in the Wartburg Castle in 1521 for eight months, he used that time to produce a German language translation of the New Testament. It is important to remember that Luther’s translation was not the first German translation of the Bible. There were in fact fourteen translations of the Bible in German before Luther. But Luther’s translation was significant because it was the best. The older translations were clunky and not easily understood by the people. Luther wanted a Bible translation that could be read or heard and understood. For that reason, Luther did not attempt to create a “word for word” translation from Greek (of the New Testament) and Hebrew (of the Old Testament). Instead, Luther’s guiding principle of translation was “meaning for meaning.” For him, it was necessary first to understand the point of the original language and then put that into the clearest German possible.

Luther’s work paid off. His translation soon became widespread and popular. It is important to understand that even with the printing press, books in Luther’s time were expensive, and most people could not afford their own Bibles. Many congregations themselves could not afford a Bible. But Luther’s translation soon became normative, and it also became the basis for the modern German language. The influence of Luther’s German Bible for German speaking lands can be compared to how the King James Version of the English Bible of 1611 has influenced modern English.

A few years after the New Testament came out, Luther translated the Old Testament, and the entire German Bible was published in 1524. Luther took great care in his translation. When translating the Hebrew language from the Old Testament book of Leviticus, for example, there are many places that refer to the Israelite law involving animal sacrifice and animal organs. To make sure he was translating the Hebrew words correctly, he went to the local butcher and asked him to give him the German words for the various animal organs.

Translating the Bible (or anything, really) from one language to another is challenging. But Luther reminds us that the main point is not simply translating things “word for word.” No translation of the Bible can be completely word for word and still make sense in English or any other language. It is the meaning of the original that matters, and we seek to express that meaning in our own languages to this day.

One final note regarding Luther’s translations: In the text of the Apostles’ and Nicene Creeds, it says toward the end in the original Greek and Latin that “I believe in the holy *catholic* Church.” Luther (and actually others before him) decided that the best way to express the meaning of that word “catholic” was to translate it as *christlich*, meaning “Christian” in German. The word “catholic” simply means “universal” or “wide ranging.” It meant that the Christian faith was not something that only one group in one place held, but rather that the Church of Jesus Christ exists everywhere people have faith. It also meant that true Christians believe in the whole message of the faith instead of only one part of it. Luther’s decision to write “the holy Christian Church” is one example of his “meaning for meaning” principle of translation.

Luther’s legacy goes far beyond religion, and many people in Germany today have an appreciation of him for things beyond his faith. Luther’s impact on the modern German language through his translation of the Bible is one example of the far reaching influence that Martin Luther had on his own land and the rest of the world.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Special Announcements**

* The annual **ice cream social** will be on July 23, starting in the afternoon. Spread the word! Last year, the attendance was excellent, and hopefully that can be duplicated this year.
* **Membership committee, please note:** Pastor had planned on having a meeting of the membership committee on Wednesday July 5 at 7:00 PM. However, he needs to change that now to the following week, Wednesday July 12 at 6:00 PM, before the church council meeting.
* **Congratulations** to Karrah Johnson on her marriage to Wayne Bruegman, held on July 15, 2017!

**Commemoration of the Saints**

Lutherans do not venerate (pray to) special people called “saints.” Our Lutheran confessional documents speak against that practice. However, those same documents that prohibit the veneration of saints encourage Christian people to look to the lives of significant Christians of the past as a source of encouragement for our lives in the present.

[](https://www.bing.com/images/search?view=detailV2&ccid=ah%2bTVljS&id=29F8E8CCEC915DCDF6C89160A27B0C7BED305983&thid=OIP.ah-TVljSGeIfZpDdypMdPQDoEs&q=johann+sebastian+bach&simid=607994051583545227&selectedIndex=2)

For July of 2017, we remember **Johann Sebastian Bach**, the famous Lutheran composer and church musician, who carried out most of his work in Leipzig, Germany. He is commemorated on July 28, the anniversary of his death.

The music of Johann Sebastian Bach is all but universally admired among musicians, even secular ones. No one can deny his contribution to the field of music. He was a representative of the baroque musical style, and his works remain popular to this day. But though he did write some secular musical pieces, Johann Sebastian Bach is widely regarded as the greatest of all composers of music for Christian worship. He was born in 1685 in Eisenach, Thuringia, Germany, into a family of distinguished musicians. From 1723 until his death in 1750 he served in Leipzig at the St. Thomas (Lutheran) Church, where Pr. Tom served his pastoral internship. Bach is interred in the chancel of the church, near the altar where he regularly received Holy Communion. As the cantor (church musician) at the St. Thomas Church, he taught, conducted, sang, played, and composed. He had a total of twenty children during his two marriages, of whom nine survived him, four of whom are also remembered as composers.

Bach was a deeply faithful man, a Lutheran, who wrote a considerable amount of music for worship, but unfortunately, his faith commitment is often ignored by his secular admirers. He drew on the German tradition of hymn-tunes from people like Martin Luther and others and arranged many of them as cantatas, with elaborate choir settings for most stanzas, and a plain four-part setting for the final stanza, to be sung by the congregation with the choir. At the bottom of his musical compositions, Bach always wrote the Latin words “Soli Deo Gloria,” which means “Glory to God alone.” In spite of his fame in the present day, during his life Bach was neither famous nor wealthy. In his music, Bach sought to lead people in the praise of God.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

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**Worship Schedule**

**July 2:** Fourth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion at altar rail (Green)

**July 9:** Fifth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**July 16:** Sixth Sunday after Pentecost with Holy Communion continuous line (Green)

**July 23:** Seventh Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**July 30:** Eighth Sunday after Pentecost (Green)

**Featured Hymn for July 2017**

***Great Is Thy Faithfulness***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 211*

1. Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father, There is no shadow of turning with Thee; Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they fail not As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

*Refrain*: Great is Thy faithfulness! Great is Thy faithfulness! Morning by morning new mercies I see; All I have needed Thy hand hath provided—Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

1. Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest, Sun, moon and stars in their courses above, join with all nature in manifold witness to Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.
2. Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth, Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide; strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

* *Thomas O. Chisholm, 1866-1960*
* *Tune: William M. Runyan*

*Note: Chisholm was born in a log cabin in Franklin, Kentucky and became a Methodist minister. Billy Graham’s crusades made this beloved Gospel hymn, taken from Lamentations 3, a staple.*

**Monthly Watchword for July 2017**

“And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment.”

* Philippians 1:9 ESV

**Ushers for July:**

* Head Ushers:
  + Denise and Leslie Yule
* Ushers:
  + Melvin and Sandra Barger
  + Brandon Barger
  + Stella Branstiter
  + Roger Guenther

**For Further Information on LCMC and the NALC:** You can download and read the newsletters of both organizations at the following addresses:

* **http://www.lcmc.net/newsletters**
* **http://thenalc.org/newsletter/**

**Website:** The web address is as follows:

* **www.gselclindy.weebly.com**

**Some Quotes from Martin Luther:**

“Behold, Lord, here is an empty cask that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in faith, strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and fill me with fire that my love may flow out over my neighbor.”

“No power on earth is so noble and so great as that of parents.”

“He who is justified performs good works; for this is the meaning of Scripture: Justification precedes good works, and works are performed by those who are justified.”

**From Martin Luther’s Small Catechism:**

**The Ten Commandments**

**Introduction and First Commandment**

**The Introduction:** I am the Lord your God.

**The First Commandment:** You shall have no other gods before me.

**What does this mean?** We should fear, love, and trust God above all things.

**Guidelines for Ushers**

Revised 6/14/2017

Thank you to all members of the congregation of Good Shepherd Evangelical Lutheran Church who serve in the important role of usher throughout the year! These guidelines are meant to assist you in the details of this role. We wanted to include a copy in the newsletter, but they are also posted in the kitchen cabinet. If you have any questions, simply ask the pastor. Thank you again!

**Altar Colors:**

The color of the paraments (altar cloths) changes according to the season of the church year. Below is a list of seasons and what color should be used.

* **Season of Advent** (four weeks): Blue
* **Season of Christmas** (Christmas Eve and twelve days following): White
* **Epiphany of our Lord** (January 6): White
* **Baptism of our Lord** (first Sunday after Epiphany): White
* **Season after Epiphany** (length varies year to year): Green
* **Ash Wednesday** (beginning of Lent, varies year to year): Black or Purple
* **Season of Lent** (five Sundays): Purple
* **Holy Week** (beginning with Palm Sunday, week before Easter): Purple
* **Season of Easter** (seven weeks): White
* **Day of Pentecost** (Sunday after seventh week of Easter): Red
* **Sunday of the Holy Trinity** (First Sunday after Pentecost): White
* **Season after Pentecost** (beginning with second Sunday after Pentecost): Green
* **Reformation Sunday** (last Sunday in October): Red
* **All Saints Sunday** (first Sunday in November): White

There are occasionally other festivals that fall on various Sundays during the “green seasons,” which can affect which color is used. If the color needs to be changed at some point, the pastor will note that in the newsletter and church bulletin. If you have any questions, simply ask the pastor.

**Before worship:**

There are a few details to which to attend prior to worship.

* Place the hymn numbers in the bulletin on the board at the front of the church along with the name of the Sunday.
* Make sure the candles on the altar are filled with liquid wax before worship. During the season of Advent, the Advent candles need to be filled as well. It is better to fill them in the kitchen rather than at the altar so that the liquid wax does not spill on the altar
* Designate someone as a lector (reader of Scripture) for the first and second reading (sometimes there is only one reading)
* Designate two people to collect the offering. The pastor will hand the plates to them at the front, and when they are finished, they bring the plates forward to the pastor
* Designate one or two people (often children) to light the candles before worship and extinguish them during the closing hymn
* The Paschal candle (large candle on separate stand) is lit during the season of Easter, the Baptism of our Lord, on any Sunday when there is a baptism, as well as during funerals. This candle can be hard for children to light, so an adult might need to help
* During the school year, the youth often are able to fill many of these roles for the third Sunday of the month

**After worship:**

There are a few details to which to attend after worship.

* Count the money from the offering
* Make sure that the thermostat in the sanctuary as well as fellowship hall is returned to 64 degrees during the winter and 75 during the summer
* Make sure the lights are turned off in the sanctuary and the fellowship hall
* Make sure the front and back doors are locked after everyone has left

**Set-up for Holy Communion:**

The Lord’s Supper (Holy Communion) is offered on the first and third Sundays of the month, unless the pastor is away and there is no ordained minister to preside, in which case there will be no Holy Communion. On the first Sunday of the month, the Lord’s Supper will be received by kneeling (if able). On the third Sunday of the month, the Lord’s Supper will be received through a continuous line.

* **First Sunday of the month:**
  + Fill individual cups in the stacked silver trays in the bottom cabinet. Most Sundays, 45 to 50 cups (requiring two trays) should be sufficient, but there might need to be more depending on the Sunday. Set the filled trays with the lid on the right side of the altar.
  + Left of the silver trays, set a medium sized linen (called a “corporal”) on the altar, serving as a kind of “placemat.” On top of the corporal, place the ***silver plate*** (called a “paten”) to the left. On the paten, put the wafers of bread, and cover the paten with a small sized linen. About 50 wafers should be sufficient for most Sundays, but occasionally there might need to be more depending on the Sunday.
  + To the left of the paten with the wafers (still on the corporal), place the ***silver cup*** (called a “chalice”). Fill the chalice with a small amount of wine (the same amount as in one of the small cups). On top of the chalice, place the “pall” (a piece of cardboard covered with linen, found behind the altar).
  + Place a large linen over the trays, paten, and chalice.
  + Place some goldfish crackers in the white ceramic cup and set it under the offering plates.
  + Place two baskets, one each on the front pew on each side of the sanctuary. As people return to their seats from the altar rail, they will place their empty cups in the baskets.
  + ***Only one assistant*** is needed on the first Sunday of the month. The assistant will follow the pastor with the silver tray with cups of wine. To each communicant, the assistant distributes a cup with the words “The blood of Christ, shed for you.”
  + After everyone has returned to their seats, the pastor will serve the assistant at the rail.
  + Then the pastor will kneel at the rail. Serve him the bread with the words “The body of Christ, given for you.” Then bring the sliver chalice from the altar to serve him with the words “The blood of Christ, shed for you.”
  + The pastor will then return to the altar with the chalice, and the assistant may return to the pews.
* **Third Sunday of the month:**
  + In the middle of the altar, set a medium sized linen (called a “corporal”), which serves as a kind of “placemat.”
  + Fill the ***two ceramic blue cups*** (called “chalices”) with wine about half full and place them toward the front of the altar. Cover each chalice with a “pall” (a piece of cardboard covered with linen). On ***one*** of the chalices, place a small linen (called a “purificator,” on top of the corporal).
  + Behind the chalices in the middle, set ***one ceramic blue plate*** (called a “paten”), and put the wafers of bread on the paten. Normally, about 50 wafers should be sufficient, but there might need to be more depending on the Sunday. Cover the paten with a small linen.
  + Place a large linen over the chalices and the paten.
  + Place some goldfish crackers in the white ceramic cup and set it under the offering plates.
  + ***Two assistants*** are needed on the third Sunday of the month. The assistants will each hold a chalice and will begin by standing on the right side of the pastor. The first assistant (closest to the pastor) will hold the chalice for those who desire “intinction” (dipping the wafer into wine before consuming it). As people consume the bread and wine, speak to them “The blood of Christ, shed for you.” The second assistant will hold the chalice for those who desire to drink directly out of the cup. It is possible that no one will want to do this, which is fine. But for those who do, gently place the chalice in their hands as they drink, with the words “The blood of Christ, shed for you.” Then take the chalice and wipe with the purificator the area from which they have drunk and then rotate the chalice so that the next person drinks from a clean place
  + After everyone has returned to the pews, the assistants and the pastor will stand directly in front of the altar. The pastor will serve the two assistants, and then the assistants will serve the pastor. Normally, the pastor will drink directly from the chalice. Then the assistants may return to the pews
* **During worship:**
  + Designate someone to serve as an usher to direct people forward for the Lord’s Supper. On the first Sunday of the month, direct between six to eight people at a time to come forward and kneel (if able) for Holy Communion. After that “table” has returned to the pews, direct another “table” of six to eight people, and so on. On the third Sunday of the month, direct people to come forward in a continuous line beginning on the “pulpit side” of the sanctuary (the left side when facing the altar). Then, after that side has finished, allow the communion assistants to move to the other side of the pastor before directing people on the other side to come forward
* **After worship has concluded:** 
  + Return the linens to their place under the altar
  + Take any unused wafers and store them in the plastic bag in the kitchen cabinet
  + On the first Sunday of the month, if there are any cups remaining filled with wine, pour them into a single glass from the cabinet, and the pastor will pour the wine on the ground outside
  + The pastor will take the used Communion cups, place them in a bowl, and rinse them with water before pouring the water used to rinse the cups on the ground outside
  + On the third Sunday of the month, the pastor will take the chalices outside and pour the wine on the ground
  + Return all of the Communion paraphernalia to its proper place in the cabinets after they have been thoroughly rinsed out as needed

**July 2017**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| 2  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (altar rail)  Green | 3 | 4 | 5  Pr. Tom in Lindy | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 9  Worship, 10:30  Green | 10 | 11 | 12  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Membership committee meeting, 6:00 PM  Council meeting, 7:00 PM | 13 | 14 | 15  Johnson and Bruegman wedding |
| 16  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion (continuous line)  Green | 17 | 18 | 19  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Women’s meeting, 10:00 AM | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| 23  Worship, 10:30  Green  Ice cream social, starting at 4:00 PM | 24 | 25 | 26 27 28 29  Pr. Tom in Lindy | | | |
| 30 | 31 |  |  | | | |

Good Shepherd Evangelical

Lutheran Church of Lindy

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