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

**Lindy, Nebraska**

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**The Rod and Staff**



**May 2018**

**“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord our God is giving you.”**

**The Ten Commandments: The Fourth Commandment**

Government. At times, the very word is enough to send shivers down our spines. When we think about government, we often think of negative things associated with it and those involved in it: corruption, hypocrisy, and scandal. This is understandable to an extent. We are, after all, daily inundated with news stories about wrongdoing on the part of government representatives. It never seems to end.

Government also demands things of us and imposes restrictions upon us. We pay taxes to the government, and we must obey its laws. At times we wonder if such laws are really necessary and if our hard-earned tax dollars are really being put to effective use. Are they not simply enabling the corruption? It’s easy to be resentful of government. Indeed, there are times when government *is* corrupt. Perhaps we’d be better off without it.

But not according to this fourth of the Ten Commandments. The commandment speaks of honoring “fathers” and “mothers,” but Martin Luther understood it to refer to more than just dad and mom. It refers to government more generally:

*We should fear and love God so that we do not show contempt for our parents and others in authority, nor provoke them to anger, but respect, obey, serve, love, and honor them.*

According to Martin Luther, there are three “governments” or “estates” active in the world. One of them is the organization of the Christian Church, whereby people are governed spiritually. Another is the broader civil authority of the city or state, whereby order is maintained in the world.

But he understood the “first government” to be family. Normally we don’t think of our fathers and mothers as government representatives, but Luther viewed them as such. Our first experience of being governed as children comes from our parents, who have the divine call to watch over us, teach us, guide us, and yes—even restrain us when we get out of line. God has given us fathers and mothers as a gift to govern us. As hard as it is to accept at times, all government is given by God as a gift. A sinful world needs government, or else we quickly descend into total chaos. For this reason, God gives the command to honor the government, and especially our parents, who are the closest government representatives to us. They at times impose rules on us that we don’t like, but we often come to realize later on how important such rules really were. They were intended to protect us and prepare us for the rest of our lives.

It had been some time since I had read Martin Luther’s thoughts on the Fourth Commandment in his *Large Catechism*. And so when I read them again just recently, I found myself surprised and a bit distraught after reading the first few pages. He strongly emphasized the duty of children to obey their parents as God’s representatives and of all people to honor the government. I wondered if he was ever going to talk about the duty that the government has toward those they govern. After all, we know that in many places in the world there are governments that abuse and exploit their people. And we know that sometimes parents misuse the authority they have over their children, treating them in abusive ways.

It takes a little while, but Luther does get there. He writes:

*More than enough has now been said to all those to whom this commandment applies. In addition, it would also be well to preach to parents on the nature of their responsibility, how they should treat those whom they have been appointed to rule… For he does not want scoundrels or tyrants in this office or authority; nor does he assign them this honor so that they may receive homage. Instead, they should keep in mind that they owe obedience to God, and that, above all, they should earnestly and faithfully discharge the duties of their office… Therefore do not imagine that the parental office is a matter of your pleasure or whim. It is a strict commandment and injunction of God, who holds you accountable for it.*

In other words, this commandment applies to all people and is not simply directed toward children. As important as it is for people to honor their parents and “others in authority,” those in authority also have a command from God not to abuse their power.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**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=WSumWh4U&id=F0696688C38FBED3A255442361852359F0F6C1CA&thid=OIP.WSumWh4UtTjlhhzwIT6C-gHaIG&mediaurl=http://catholicismrocks.files.wordpress.com/2010/08/saint-monica.jpg&exph=600&expw=549&q=monica+mother+of+augustine&simid=608015084788515289&selectedIndex=5)

This month, we look at the life of **Monica, mother of Augustine**. She was born in the year 322 AD in Tagaste, northern Africa and died in the year 387 AD. One of her sons, Augustine, went on to become the most influential theologian in Western Christianity. His mother Monica is commemorated on May 4.

Monica’s own parents were Christians, but her husband was not. He even prohibited their three children, Augustine being one of them, from being baptized. Through it all, Monica never ceased to pray for Augustine and her other children, even when she saw Augustine go astray. She prayed that God would open Augustine’s heart to the good news of Jesus Christ. Eventually, Augustine heard the message and was converted to faith in Christ.

It is fitting to remember Monica this month, as Mother’s Day in the United States is May 13. The above article about the Fourth Commandment also speaks of the importance that God places on parents guiding and governing their children. Monica was a faithful mother, and she has been an inspiration to Christian parents throughout the ages.

* Pr. T. E. Jacobson

**Featured Hymn for May 2018**

***Christ the Lord is Risen***

*Lutheran Hymnal for Church and Home, 153*

1. Christ the Lord is risen, he rose from death’s dark prison; So Christians sing in every place delightful songs of joy and praise:

Refrain: Glory be to God in the highest!

1. Christ the Lord is risen, our guilt has been forgiven; So Christians sing in every place delightful songs of joy and praise: Refrain
2. Christ the Lord is risen, and we will meet in heaven; So Christians sing in every place delightful songs of joy and praise: Refrain

* Nikolai F. S. Grundtvig, 1783-1872

*Note: This is Grundtvig’s version of Martin Luther’s own rewriting of the medieval German hymn* Christus is erstanden*.*

**Monthly Watchword for May 2018**

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

* Hebrews 11:1 ESV

**Ushers for May:**

* Head Ushers:
  + Randy and Karen Hanson
* Ushers:
  + Gabi Mangmoradeth
  + Marlin and Pat Kumm
  + Brad and Cindy Sage
  + Red Branstiter

**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**

**Note:** Pr. Tom will be away on Sunday May 20 for his graduation from the Ph.D. program at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN. The youth will lead worship that Sunday morning, and there will be no Holy Communion.

**Quote from Martin Luther, 500 years after his Heidelberg Disputation of April 1518:**

**“The law says ‘Do this’ and it is never done. Grace says ‘Believe this’ and everything is already done…”**

***The season of Easter lasts for fifty days. We continue to bask in the Easter afterglow of God’s completed work on our behalf through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Happy Easter!***

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

**The Ten Commandments: The Tenth Commandment**

*You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife, his workers, or his livestock, or anything that is your neighbors.*

*What does this mean?*

*We should fear and love God so that we do not ruin our neighbor’s relationships with their husband or wife, workers, or livestock, or try to lure them away, but encourage them to remain and serve each other faithfully.*

**Birthdays for May**

*Note: This list of birthdays is a work in progress, as we are currently trying to gather membership information from the old congregational record into an electronic form. If your name is not listed in the appropriate month, please let pastor know your birthday so that it can be added in the future. If you would not like your name to be listed, simply let pastor know. The birthdays are provided here as a way of giving thanks for the lives of members of the congregation. Happy birthday to all!*

* May 3: Jacob Stewart
* May 10: Hope Stewart
* May 13: Venita Sage
* May 20: Mark McManigal

**Baptismal Anniversaries for May**

*Note: Just as it is important to acknowledge the beginning of our earthly lives with our birthdays, it is even more important for us as Christians to remember the day when God has given us a new birthday, a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3). Lutherans confess that baptism is the means by which God gives us as a part of sinful humanity a new relationship with him, a promise that our faith can look to all our lives. In turn, we are called to a life of repentance and faith that trusts in Christ as our salvation. As with the birthdays, this list is a work in progress. Blessed baptismal anniversaries to everyone!*

* May 4: Jeff Hanson
* May 8: Jamie Olson
* May 9: Jerrick Grabber
* May 11: Trenton Guenther
* May 14: Randy Hanson
* May 17: Connie McDonald
* May 19: Patience Teboe
* May 20: Leah Poppe
* May 31: Rydder Eckmann

**Confirmands from April, 2018**

**Jacob Daniel Douglas Stewart**, 4/22/18; **Stran David Sage**, 4/22/18; **Tatum James Olson**, 4/22/18; **Hudson Brady Barger**, 4/22/18

They became members of the Church when they were baptized and have now have completed a time of basic instruction in the Christian faith. When God begins a relationship with us as we are baptized, we are called to grow in deeper understanding of the love of God and profess our faith in word and deed, something that continues all throughout life, well beyond confirmation day. We pray for these two in their continued life of faith in the fellowship of the congregation and whole Christian Church.

**May 2018**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|  |  | 1 | 2  Pr. Tom in Lindy | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30 with Holy Communion and first Communion  (Altar rail)  Sixth Sunday of Easter  White | 7 | 8 | 9  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Church council, 7:00 PM | 10  The Ascension of our Lord  (Fortieth day of Easter) | 11 | 12 |
| 13  Sunday School, 9:30  Worship, 10:30  Seventh Sunday of Easter  White | 14 | 15 | 16  Pr. Tom in Lindy  Women’s meeting, 10:00 AM | 17 | 18 | 19 |
| 20  Worship, 10:30  (Youth led, without Holy Communion)  Day of Pentecost  Red | 21 | 22 | 23  Pr. Tom in Lindy | 24 | 25 | 26 |
| 27  Worship, 10:30  Sunday of the Holy Trinity  White | 28 | 29 | 30 31  Pr. Tom in Lindy | | | |
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Good Shepherd Evangelical

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