

Issues, Etc.

JOURNAL



Luther's Small Catechism: Gospel Reductionist Edition

by Todd Wilken

Wittenberg Trail: The Firm Reality of the Cross

by Dr. Russell Dawn

Summer—2019

Dear **Issues, Etc. Journal** Reader,

Greetings in the name of Jesus.

In this issue, I present a little thought experiment. Gospel Reductionism replaces the Bible as the source and norm of all theology with the Gospel. Instead of asking, “Does this idea agree with the Bible?” Gospel Reductionism asks, “Does this idea agree with the Gospel?” What would a Gospel Reductionist edition of Luther’s Small Catechism look like? Read on and see.

In our Wittenberg Trail feature, Dr. Russell Dawn tells us about his discovery of the firm reality of the Cross in the Lutheran confession of faith after his time tottering on the flimsy foundation of experiential Anglicanism.

You’ll also find a list of sponsoring congregations at the end of the **Journal**.

Enjoy reading this edition of the **Journal**.

Wir sind alle Bettler,

Todd Wilken, host
Issues, Etc.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Todd Wilken".

Coming Reformation Day, 2019

*Study the Bible with the Church,
Past and Present*

A new podcast from

Lutheran Public Radio

A daily, verse-by-verse Bible Study

hosted by

Pastor Will Weedon



THE WORD OF THE LORD
ENDURES FOREVER

Prayerfully Consider

"Maybe I could be a pastor..."
"Maybe I could be a deaconess..."



Prayerfully Consider Visit

October 10–12, 2019

April 2–4, 2020

October 15–17, 2020

Register:

www.ctsfw.edu/PCV

This is a three-day event for men and women of all ages to contemplate the vocations of pastor and deaconess. Explore the campus of CTSFW, engage with students and faculty, and experience rich fellowship and worship. Find more information at www.ctsfw.edu/PCV.

Christ Academy: College

October 25–27, 2019

October 30–November 1, 2020

Register: www.ctsfw.edu/College

At this four-day event, undergraduate men and women experience for themselves what seminary life is like. Come sit in on classes, get to know professors and students, and worship with the CTSFW community. More information is available at www.ctsfw.edu/College.



Christ Academy: Timothy School

For High-School-Age Men

Date: June 14–27, 2020

Register:

www.ctsfw.edu/TimothySchool

What will you do after high school? Is the Office of Holy Ministry something you have thought about or been encouraged to consider? If so, join us for a two-week retreat to explore the pastoral ministry, participate in theological studies, and form lasting friendships.

Christ Academy: Phoebe School

For High-School-Age Women

Date: June 14–27, 2020

Register:

www.ctsfw.edu/PhoebeSchool



Are you trying to decide on what direction to go after high school? Does sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ through acts of mercy and human care sound like something you could do? Then come and explore God's Word on mercy, participate in theological studies, meet deaconesses, and form lasting friendships.

Whom Shall I Send?

The Lord Jesus sends pastors to local congregations and all nations to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, and deaconesses embody Christ's mercy throughout the world. The Gospel lives and endures through tangible means of grace, and the need for pastors and deaconesses continues. Refer promising young and mature men and women to CTSFW. Call us at (800) 481-2155 or email Admission@ctsfw.edu.

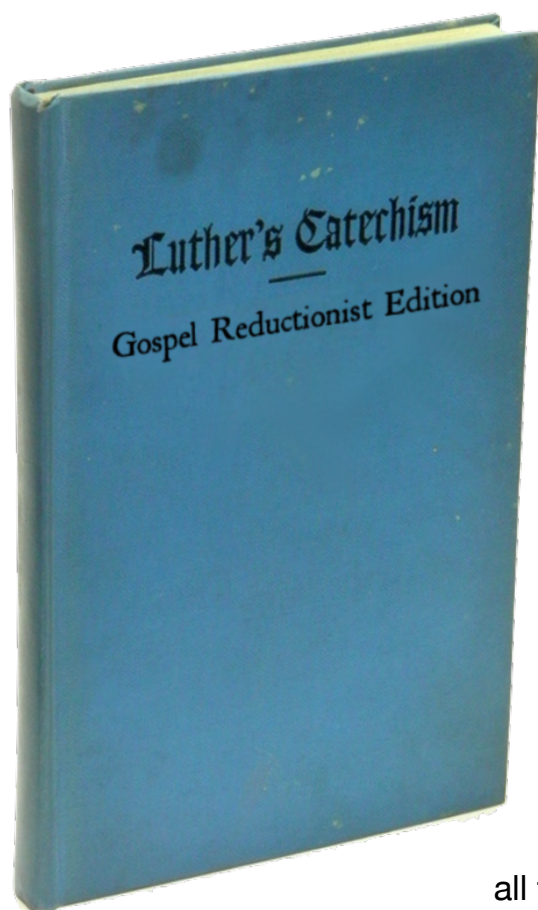


Concordia Theological Seminary

6600 N. Clinton Street
Fort Wayne, IN 46825
www.ctsfw.edu

Contact Information

(800) 481-2155
Admission@ctsfw.edu
www.ctsfw.edu/Admission



Luther's Small Catechism: Gospel Reductionist Edition

by Todd Wilken

I have written about Gospel Reductionism a lot in the last several years. The reason is that I am convinced that Gospel Reductionism is alive and well in American Lutheranism.

In its crassest form, Gospel Reductionism replaces the Bible as the source and norm of all theology. It replaces the Bible with the Gospel.

The Gospel becomes the standard by which theological ideas are judged to be true or false. Instead of asking, "Does this idea agree with the Bible?" Gospel Reductionism asks, "Does this idea agree with the Gospel?"

Gospel Reductionism is the big, unpaid bill of the 20th century's Battle for the Bible in American Christianity, and in American Lutheranism in particular. There were two allied, hostile forces during the Battle for the Bible. First and more obviously, there was liberal Bible scholarship. Second and less obviously, there was Gospel Reductionism. Many in American Lutheranism simply surrendered to both. A few didn't. But among those who entered the battle, most focused their attention almost entirely on combatting liberal Bible scholarship. Relatively few recognized Gospel Reductionism as an enemy allied with liberal Bible scholarship.

Gospel Reductionism invaded Lutheranism along with liberal Bible Scholarship. The “Battle for the Bible” drove back liberal Bible scholarship, but failed to do the same to Gospel Reductionism. Gospel Reductionism stayed, settled down, applied for, and was granted citizenship.

Gospel Reductionism divides the Bible into important doctrines and unimportant doctrines. Doctrines that agree with the Gospel are important. Doctrines that don’t aren’t. What kind of doctrines have been judged to be unimportant? In some cases, Gospel Reductionism eventually decided that most of the Bible had no direct relationship to the Gospel. Today, in denominations where Gospel Reductionism holds sway, almost everything in the Bible can be questioned or denied, up to and including the resurrection of Jesus, all in the name of the Gospel.

Gospel Reductionism also pits Law and Gospel against one another. Some brave souls attempted this to deny the Law entirely, lapsing into complete antinomianism. But true antinomianism is like one of those radioactive isotopes with a very short half-life. It decays quickly, usually into what Christian Smith and Melinda Lundquist Denton have famously called, “moralistic therapeutic deism.”

In actual practice, Gospel Reductionists have rejected only particular parts and uses of the Law. It’s still wrong to cheat on your wife, unless she’s fine with that. Then you call it “serial non-monogamy.” Killing is wrong, unless the victim is an unborn child, a mentally disabled person, or the elderly.

Gospel Reductionism also manifests itself in less obvious ways. Does your pastor’s preaching and teaching give you the impression that the Gospel is good but the Law is bad, or a necessary evil? He may be under the influence of Gospel Reductionism. Ask your pastor, “Why did God give us His Law?” If he answers, “To show us both our sin and what the life of good works and love for the neighbor looks like,” good! But if he answers, “To show us our sin” and then

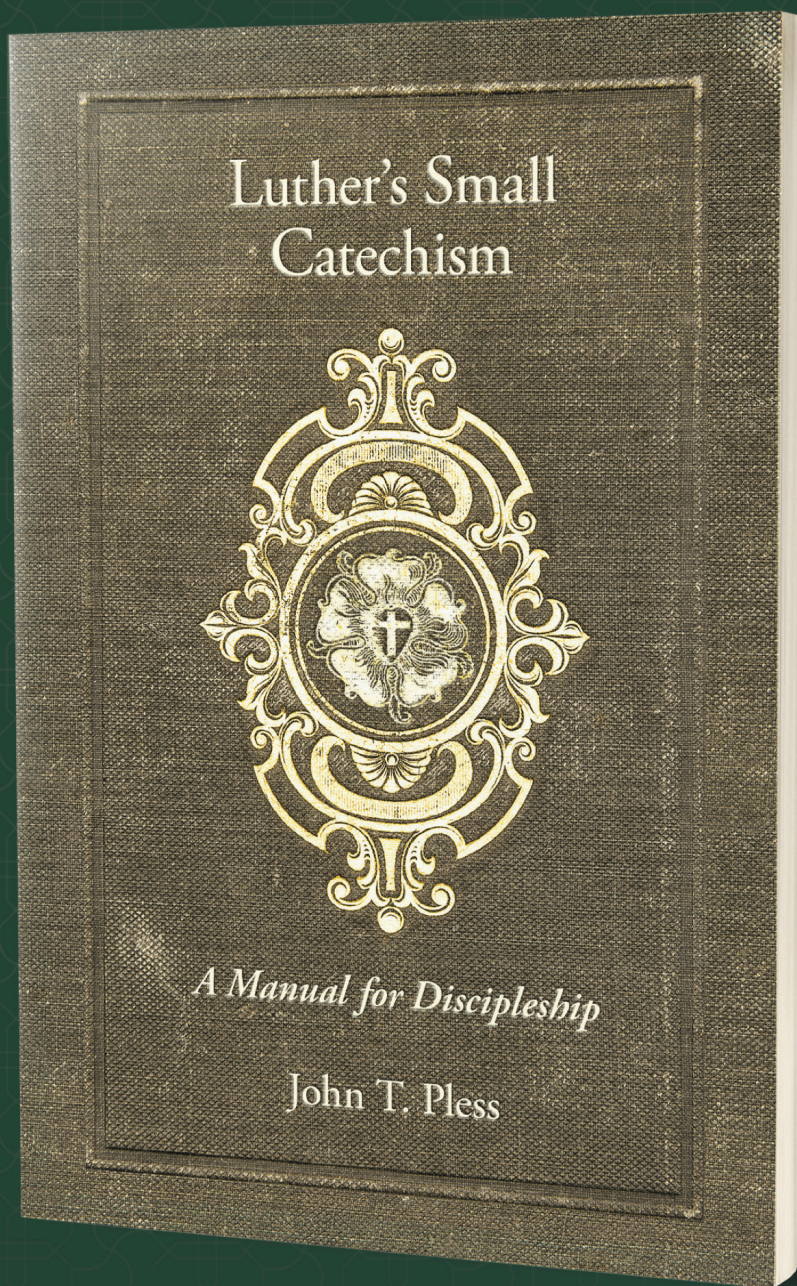
stops talking, you may well be talking to a Gospel Reductionist. Gospel Reductionism can be found not only in what a pastor says, but also in what he doesn't say, or refuses to say. If a pastor refuses to say that God's Law is also teaching God's good will for the Christian's life, he is likely under the influence of Gospel Reductionism.

This refusal to talk about the positive teaching of the Law for the Christian is sometimes couched in the language of Christian Freedom. "You are free in Christ" replaces the positive teaching of the Law. What does that freedom look like? Am I free to steal from my employer? Am I free to serve my neighbor by taking her to an abortion clinic? Am I free to serve my Muslim neighbor by worshipping with him at the local mosque? If not, why not? The answers to these questions aren't found in the Gospel. They are found in the Law. But if the shape of that freedom is deliberately left unspecified, and the positive teaching of the Law is avoided, those answers are never given. This is textbook Gospel Reductionism.

All this is the result of attempting to replace the Bible with the Gospel. If applied consistently, Gospel Reductionism effectively *reduces* theology to only those very few doctrines that are considered directly related to the Gospel. The Bible is selectively mined for Gospel-friendly ideas. But the Gospel doesn't exist in a Scriptural vacuum. The Gospel itself depends on the rest of the Bible. As the Bible is reduced, so the Gospel itself is also reduced to a vague message of divine forgiveness, or more likely today, affirmation.

When I hear pastors make statements like, "How would the Gospel be threatened if Adam and Eve weren't real, historical people?" or "I'm not too concerned if someone denies the doctrine of _____ as long as they don't deny the Gospel," or "The Gospel is all that matters," I hear the echoes, if not the voice, of Gospel Reductionism.

Luther's guide for a life of discipleship.



“A very helpful and edifying resource—rooted in the Gospel, clear, biblical, and deserving of several readings and sharings with neighbors.”

—Dr. Wade Johnston, Assistant
Professor of Theology,
Wisconsin Lutheran College

Utilize the catechism to its fullest at
cph.org/discipleship



1.800.325.3040

© 2019 Concordia Publishing House

I wonder what they are actually teaching the people under their care. What do you teach in Bible class if the only important teaching of the Bible is the bare Gospel? What do you teach your catechism classes?

And that got me thinking: What would a Gospel Reductionist edition of Luther's Small Catechism look like? Let's see.

Luther's Small Catechism Gospel Reductionism Edition

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

I. The Ten Commandments

The First Commandment.

Thou shalt have no other gods.

What does this mean?--Answer.

~~We should~~ **don't** fear, love, and trust in God above all things.

The Second Commandment.

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.

What does this mean?--Answer.

~~We should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not curse, swear, use witchcraft, lie, or deceive by His name, but call upon it in every trouble, pray, praise, and give thanks.~~

The Third Commandment.

Thou shalt sanctify the holy day.

What does this mean?--Answer.

~~We should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not despise preaching and His Word, but hold it sacred, and gladly hear and learn it.~~

The Fourth Commandment.

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother [~~that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long upon the earth~~].

What does this mean?

*We ~~should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not despise nor anger our parents and masters, but give them honor, serve, obey, and hold them in love and esteem.~~*

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?

*We ~~should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.~~*

The Sixth Commandment.

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

What does this mean?

*We ~~should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may lead a chaste and decent life in words and deeds, and each love and honor his spouse.~~*

The Seventh Commandment.

Thou shalt not steal.

What does this mean?

*We ~~should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not take our neighbor's money or property, nor get them by false ware or dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.~~*

The Eighth Commandment.

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

What does this mean?

*We ~~should~~ **don't** fear and love God ~~that we may not deceitfully belie, betray, slander, or defame our neighbor,~~*

~~but defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything.~~

The Ninth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house.

What does this mean?

~~We should **don't** fear and love God that we may not craftily seek to get our neighbor's inheritance or house, and obtain it by a show of [justice and] right, etc., but help and be of service to him in keeping it.~~

The Tenth Commandment.

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid-servant, nor his cattle, nor anything that is his.

What does this mean?

~~We should **don't** fear and love God that we may not estrange, force, or entice away our neighbor's wife, servants, or cattle, but urge them to stay and do their duty.~~

What Does God Say of All These Commandments?

~~He says thus (Exod. 20:5f): I the Lord, thy God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments.~~

What does this mean?

~~God threatens to punish all that transgress these commandments. Therefore we should dread His wrath and not act contrary to these commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all that keep these commandments. Therefore we should also love and trust in him, and gladly do according to his commandments.~~

As you can see, Gospel Reductionism, if consistently applied, reduces the Ten Commandments to a truncated, non-specific accusation of violating the First Commandment. All the particulars are lost. It is true that the First

Commandment encompasses all of the Ten Commandments. But the First Commandment doesn't exhaust the other commandments.

Also, since the Law can only accuse, the Ten Commandments have nothing to teach us. They reveal only our sin, and nothing of God's order and will for one's life. Does the Creed fare any better?

II. The Creed

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

The First Article, Of Creation.

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

What does this mean?--Answer.

*I believe that God has made me and all creatures; that He has given me my body and soul, eyes, ears, and all my limbs, my reason, and all my senses, and still preserves them; in addition thereto, clothing and shoes, meat and drink, house and homestead, wife and children, fields, cattle, and all my goods; that He provides me richly and daily with all that I need to support this body and life, protects me from all danger, and guards me and preserves me from all evil; and all this out of pure, fatherly, divine goodness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness in me; ~~for all which I owe it to Him to thank, praise, serve, and obey Him.~~ This is most certainly true **insofar as it agrees with the Gospel.***

The Second Article, Of Redemption.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

Have you seen what LutheranFCU has to offer?

- ✓ Checking/Savings
 - ✓ Auto Loans
 - ✓ Mortgage Loans
 - ✓ Credit Cards
 - ✓ Ministry of the Month
 - ✓ Payment Processing
 - ✓ Auto research services
 - ✓ Financial Education Center
 - ✓ Congregation/District Checking and Savings
- And much more!*



LutheranFCU. Good for You. Good for the Church.

LutheranFCU.org

314.394.2790

What does this mean?

*I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father from eternity, and also true man, born of the Virgin Mary, is my Lord, who has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature, purchased and won me from all sins **as I define sin**, from death, and from the power of the devil, not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death, ~~in order that I may be His own, and live under Him in His kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness,~~ even as He is risen from the dead, lives and reigns to all eternity. This is most certainly true **insofar as it agrees with the Gospel.***

The Third Article, Of Sanctification **Conversion.**

I believe in the Holy Ghost; one holy Christian Church, the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

What does this mean?

*I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me by the Gospel, ~~enlightened me with His gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith; even as He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctified the whole Christian Church on earth, and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in which Christian Church He forgives daily and richly all sins to me and all believers, and at the last day will raise up me and all the dead, and will give to me and to all believers in Christ everlasting life.~~ This is most certainly true **insofar as it agrees with the Gospel.***

To be honest, if I consistently applied Gospel Reductionism's principle to the Creed and its explanations, nothing would have survived the cut. As stated above, there is little in the Bible that cannot be questioned or denied when Gospel Reductionism is at work. Imposing the Gospel as the only norm of truth leaves very little of the Bible's teaching intact. This is why practitioners of Gospel Reductionism are highly selective in what they impose their Gospel

standard upon. They know that it's hard to stop Gospel Reductionism once it is set in motion.

III. The Lord's Prayer

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

Our Father who art in heaven.

What does this mean?

God would thereby tenderly urge us to believe that He is our true Father, and that we are his true children, ~~so that we may ask Him confidently with all assurance, as dear children ask their dear father.~~

The First Petition.

Hallowed be Thy name.

What does this mean?

God's name is indeed ~~holy in itself; but we pray in this petition that it may become holy among us also.~~

~~How is this done?~~

~~*When the Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we as the children of God also lead holy lives in accordance with it. To this end help us, dear Father in heaven. But he that teaches and lives otherwise than God's Word teaches profanes the name of God among us. From this preserve us, Heavenly Father.*~~

The Second Petition.

Thy kingdom come.

What does this mean?

The kingdom of God comes indeed without our prayer, of itself; ~~but we pray in this petition that it may come unto us also.~~

How is this done?

*When our heavenly Father gives us his Holy Spirit, so that by his grace we believe his holy Word **Gospel** and lead a godly life here in time and yonder in eternity.*

The Third Petition.

Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

What does this mean?

The good and gracious will of God is done indeed without our prayer; but we pray in this petition that it may be done among us also.

How is this done?

*When God ~~breaks and hinders every evil counsel and will which would not let us hallow the name of God nor let His kingdom come, such as the will of the devil, the world, and our flesh;~~ but strengthens and keeps us steadfast in his Word **Gospel** and in faith unto our end. This is his gracious and good will.*

The Fourth Petition.

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean?

God gives daily bread, even without our prayer, to all wicked men; but we pray in this petition that He would lead us to know it, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread?

Everything that belongs to the support and wants of the body, such as meat, drink, clothing, shoes, house, homestead, field, cattle, money, goods, a ~~pious~~ spouse, ~~pious~~ children, ~~pious~~ servants, ~~pious~~ and faithful magistrates, good government, good weather, peace, health, ~~discipline~~, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

The Fifth Petition.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look upon our sins, nor deny such petitions on account of them; for we are worthy of none of the things for which we pray, neither have we deserved them; but that he would grant them all to us by grace; for we daily sin much, and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. ~~So will we verily, on our part, also heartily forgive and also readily do good to those who sin against us.~~

The Sixth Petition.

And lead us not into temptation.

What does this mean?

God, indeed, tempts no one; but we pray in this petition that God would guard and keep us, ~~so that the devil, the world, and our flesh may not deceive us, nor seduce us into misbelief, despair, and other great shame and vice; and though we be assailed by them, that still we may finally overcome and gain the victory.~~

The Seventh Petition.

But deliver us from evil.

What does this mean?

We pray in this petition, as in a summary, that our Father in heaven would deliver us from all manner of evil, of body and soul, property and honor, and at last, when our last hour shall come, grant us a blessed end, and graciously take us from this vale of tears to himself into heaven.

Amen.

What does this mean?

That I should be certain that these petitions are acceptable to our Father in heaven and heard; for he himself ~~has~~ ~~commanded us so to pray, and~~ has promised that he will hear us. Amen, Amen; that is, yea, yea, it shall be so.

The Catechism's treatment of the Lord's Prayer fares better than the Commandments and the Creed under Gospel Reductionism. However, you will

notice that because the standard of truth is no longer the Bible, but the Gospel, all references to God's Word must go. This is especially in evidence in the second half of the Catechism.

IV. The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

What is Baptism?

*Baptism is not simple water only, but it is the water comprehended in ~~God's command~~ **the Gospel** and connected with ~~God's Word~~ **the Gospel**.*

Which is that ~~word of God~~ **Gospel**?

Christ, our Lord, ~~says in the last chapter of Matthew: Go ye into all the world and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.~~

What does Baptism give or profit?

*It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and gives eternal salvation ~~to all who believe this~~, as the ~~Word~~ **Gospel** and promises of God declare.*

Which are such ~~words~~ **Gospel** and promises of God?

Christ, our Lord, ~~says in the last chapter of Mark: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.~~

How can water do such great things?

*It is not the water indeed that does them, but the ~~word of God~~ **Gospel** which is in and with the water, and faith, which trusts such ~~word of God~~ **Gospel** in the water. For without the ~~word of God~~ **Gospel** the water is simple water and no baptism. But with the ~~word of God~~ **Gospel** it is a baptism, that is, a gracious water of life ~~and a washing of~~*

LW

THE LUTHERAN WITNESS

PONDER
WHAT
MATTERS



SUBSCRIBE to
The Lutheran Witness

cph.org/witness | 1.800.325.3040 | lwsubscriptions@cph.org

Visit **LW** online

[TheLutheranWitness](https://www.facebook.com/TheLutheranWitness) | [@LutheranWitness](https://twitter.com/LutheranWitness)

~~regeneration in the Holy Ghost, as St. Paul says, Titus, chapter three: By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ, our Savior, that, being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying.~~

What does such baptizing with water signify?

*It signifies that the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts **as we define them** and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise; who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.*

~~Where is this written?~~

~~St. Paul says Romans, chapter 6: We are buried with Christ by Baptism into death, that, like as he was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.~~

Consistently applied, Gospel Reductionism cannot appeal to Scripture. It must concern itself with what the Gospel alone teaches, not with what the Bible teaches. Since only the Gospel is the norm and source of theology, citing Bible passages makes no sense. Seeing this laid out this way, it quickly becomes evident that the Gospel Reductionist approach to Scripture is self refuting.

As in Gospel Reductionism's treatment of the Commandments, we must reject those parts of the Bible that speak of the results of Baptism that have anything to do with the Law other than its accusation, since these results are not, (strictly speaking) part of the Gospel.

And, since Gospel Reductionism has evacuated the particular content of the Ten Commandments, sin has no definition. We are free to define it for ourselves.

V. Confession

How Christians should be taught to confess.

What is Confession?

*Confession embraces two parts: the one is, that we confess our sins **as we ourselves define them**; the other, that we receive absolution, or forgiveness, ~~from the confessor, as from God Himself, and in no wise doubt, but firmly believe, that our sins are thereby forgiven before God in heaven.~~*

What sins should we confess?

*~~Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even of those which we do not know, as we do in the Lord's Prayer. But before the confessor we should confess those sins alone which we know and feel in our hearts. **Whatever we define as sinful.**~~*

Which are these?

*~~Here consider your station according to the Ten Commandments, whether you are a father, mother, son, daughter, master, mistress, a man-servant or maid-servant; whether you have been disobedient, unfaithful, slothful; whether you have grieved any one by words or deeds; whether you have stolen, neglected, or wasted aught, or done other injury **own definition of sin.**~~*

Set free by the Gospel from the constraints of the Bible, the Gospel Reductionist isn't only at liberty to define sin for himself, he is actually required to do so. What other moral authority is there? The Gospel Reductionist's personal moral standard is as good as anything else. There was a time during the heyday of Gospel Reductionism when its practitioners attempted to find moral limits and guidance in the Gospel itself. They called these rules by the oxymoron "Gospel Imperatives." At first, these imperatives corresponded to the Ten Commandments. Later, they would conform to the prevailing cultural standards of morality. Cut free from the Bible, this was inevitable.

So what sins do you confess to God when you decide for yourself what is right and wrong? Do you need to confess at all?

VI. The Sacrament of the Altar

As the head of the family should teach it in a simple way to his household.

What is the Sacrament of the Altar?

~~It is the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, under the bread and wine, for us Christians to eat and to drink, instituted by Christ Himself~~ **The Gospel.**

~~Where is this written?~~

~~The holy Evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and St. Paul, write thus:~~

~~Our Lord Jesus Christ, the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread: and when He had given thanks, He brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me.~~

~~After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Take, drink ye all of it. This cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the remission of sins. This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.~~

What is the benefit of such eating and drinking?

~~That is shown us in these words~~ **the Gospel:** ~~Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins; namely, that in the Sacrament forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation are given us through these words. For where there is forgiveness of sins, there is also life and salvation.~~

How can bodily eating and drinking do such great things?

~~It is not the eating and drinking, indeed, that does them, but the words which stand here, namely: Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins. Which words are, beside the~~

~~bodily eating and drinking, as the chief thing in the Sacrament; and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins.~~

Who, then, receives such Sacrament worthily?

~~Fasting and bodily preparation is, indeed, a fine outward training; but he is truly worthy and well prepared who has faith in these words: Given, and shed for you, for the remission of sins.~~

~~But he that does not believe these words, or doubts, is unworthy and unfit; for the words "For you" require all hearts to believe.~~

Without the ability to appeal to Scripture as authoritative, Gospel Reductionism cannot assemble the Bible passages necessary to coherently answer the questions posed in the Catechism. The answers to those questions aren't found in the Gospel itself.

Why is it difficult for a pastor influenced by Gospel Reductionism to actually teach the Catechism in this way?

First, Gospel Reductionism isn't consistently applied, even by those devoted to it. Why? As stated above, Gospel Reductionism is self-refuting. Gospel Reductionism forces Scripture to conform to the Gospel alone. But the Gospel doesn't exist alone. The Gospel only exists as supported and informed by Scripture. This is why traditional Lutheran teaching spoke not of only the Gospel, but of "the Gospel and all its articles."

Second, even pastors who employ Gospel Reductionism know that it isn't an honest approach to the Bible. Gospel Reductionism may begin as an amusing theological parlor trick, but it is just that: a trick. Instead of dealing with the teaching of the Bible, honestly exploring those teachings to understand not only how they relate to the Gospel, but also everything God is teaching through

them, Gospel Reductionism gives Christians permission to ignore, disregard, or even deny whatever inconvenient truths they may find.

Even more disingenuous is Gospel Reductionism's claim to do this in the name of the Gospel, for the sake of the Gospel. This claim is false. Gospel Reductionism is not about the Gospel. It is about avoiding God's Word in its totality. Gospel Reductionism guts the Bible, and in the process, guts the Gospel too.

Third, by the time a thoroughgoing Gospel Reductionist is done using the Gospel to ignore, explain away, or deny Scripture, why do catechesis at all? What's left to teach? A Gospel Reductionist edition of the Catechism turns out to be a very short and insubstantial document.

In October of 2017, for the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, I interviewed Elizabeth Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. It was a remarkable interview. The casual listener would have come away with the impression that the ELCA was all about the Gospel. Bishop Eaton spoke glowingly of the Gospel, the Bible, and of the Lutheran Confessions (of which Luther's Small Catechism is a part).

Afterward, a listener asked me how Bishop Eaton could so strongly affirm the justification of the sinner by grace, through faith, for Christ's sake, and yet preside over a denomination that also affirms and celebrates homosexual marriage and clergy, abortion on demand, radical feminism, and the entire agenda of the Sexual Revolution.

The answer was simple: Gospel Reductionism. And it was found tucked into one of Bishop Eaton's final answers. I asked her if the ELCA considered the Lutheran Confessions to be a right exposition of Holy Scripture. She answered, "The Lutheran Confessions, they are a right exposition and a witness to the Gospel, and that's part of our ordination vows."

By now you should be able to see the shift: I had asked about faithfulness to Scripture, she had answered about faithfulness to the Gospel. She substituted the Gospel for Scripture as the standard of faithfulness. This is how she could so strongly affirm justification, and at the same time affirm and celebrate so many things contrary to Scripture. Her standard of truth wasn't Scripture, it was the Gospel.

The ELCA is what it looks like when a denomination embraces Gospel Reductionism. But make no mistake, Gospel Reductionism isn't quarantined in progressive Protestantism.

Why have I chosen to use the Catechism to illustrate the danger of Gospel Reductionism? Two reasons: First, to provide a diagnostic for the laity. A Lutheran pastor should be able to teach Luther's Small Catechism word for word. If he can't, we need to ask what in the Catechism he cannot teach and why. Is it possible that he has substituted the Gospel for Scripture as his source and norm of truth?

Second, I chose to use the Catechism to illustrate the danger of Gospel Reductionism. Robust teaching of the Catechism itself is a remedy to Gospel Reductionism where it has taken hold, and a protection against it where it hasn't.

The Catechism itself teaches us that while the Gospel is what matters most, the Gospel isn't the only thing that matters. The Catechism itself teaches us that the Christian faith is centered upon the Gospel, but not exhausted by the Gospel. The Catechism itself teaches us that the only source and norm of truth—even the precious truth of the Gospel itself—is Scripture. If we want to extol the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified and raised for the salvation of sinners, we don't do so by downplaying anything else Scripture teaches. Downplaying anything Scripture teaches diminishes the Gospel. The fact is, everything else Scripture teaches is there to extol the Gospel.

Serving those who serve

**THE LUTHERAN CHURCH—MISSOURI SYNOD
MINISTRY TO THE ARMED FORCES**



Ministry to the Armed Forces

- ✪ Ecclesiastical endorsement, annual training and career management for chaplains
- ✪ Operation Barnabas and monthly newsletter *Warning Order*
- ✪ “Ministry-by-Mail” for military members
- ✪ Armed Forces Sunday resources
- ✪ Quarterly Armed Forces newsletter *So Help Me God*
- ✪ Support to all military chaplains and their families





MAKING DISCIPLES FOR LIFE

EVANGELIZING THE LOST • RETAINING THE FAITHFUL
STRENGTHENING CONGREGATIONS • PLANTING CHURCHES



designing web sites and print solutions for the Church and her people



samniemi
designworks

***design that works.
for lutherans.***

sndw.net

*Mention coupon code IEJOURNAL
for 15% off design services. Expires
12/31/19. Sam Niemi DesignWorks
is a proud supporter of Issues, Etc.
and Lutheran Public Radio.*

Wittenberg Trail: The Firm Reality of the Cross

by Dr. Russell Dawn

I was raised in the Episcopal Church USA which is now known as The Episcopal Church. That opening sentence may lead some readers to assume that this is a story of my escape from theological liberalism and “anything goes” teachings about sexuality. I did escape them by changing denominations, but that was to another Anglican denomination, and it happened years before I became Lutheran. Rather, this is a story of departing a tradition that I loved. The Anglican tradition was ultimately too theologically unclear, and too focused upon subjective experience.

Most Anglican denominations are non-confessional. That is, they do not have doctrinal statements with which clergy must agree. Even when the 39 Articles of Religion were binding in the Church of England, the content of those articles was relatively brief and general. England’s Queen Elizabeth I did not want the church to probe too deeply into people’s souls. In this way, she was able to maintain a significant measure of visible unity within the realm through the connective tissue of the Church. In her time (the late 16th century), only the most ardent Catholics or radical Puritans were unable to find a place in England’s established church. Everyone between these two extremes could be part of the local parish church, which happened also to be a local arm of royal power. Over the centuries since Elizabeth, as doctrinal confessions have faded into obscurity, visible unity has remained the strength of Anglicanism.

But this strength is also a profound weakness. Visible unity can (and generally does) hide doctrinal disunity. This disunity can lead to confusion or

even heresy. That is part of why many parishes and dioceses of The Episcopal Church, America's largest Anglican denomination, now admit all sorts of heretical teachings and practices. It was due to these heresies that I left The Episcopal Church for a small, orthodox Anglican denomination when I was in my early 30s.

But even where Anglicanism has not strayed from the faith, the doctrinal disunity can be profound. In my years as an Anglican, I was taught that the Reformation was among the greatest events in history, and that it was a tragedy. I was taught that the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper are the Body and Blood of Christ, and that they are merely symbolic reminders of the Crucifixion in the same way that a birthday cake is a reminder of someone's birth. I was taught that some are predestined to heaven and others to hell, that some are predestined to heaven but none are to hell, and that there is no predestination. I was taught that justification is by grace alone through faith alone, and that one must make a decision for Christ to partake of justification by grace. Which teaching I heard depended on which priest was preaching.

With such inconsistent teaching, it is little wonder that I was theologically confused. The one thing that was consistent in the teaching I received was the vital importance of experience. One might say that the central point of doctrine is the centrality of experience in the life of the Christian. This is not to say I was taught that experience brings salvation, but rather that certain kinds of experience are the incremental goals of the Christian life. Reaching these experiences helps to assure us of our salvation.

For instance, experience might come in the form of a connection to the liturgy (whether traditional or innovative), or perhaps a "charismatic" manifestation such as an unfamiliar prayer language, or the ability to prophesy about the future. Most decisively, however, experience would come in the forms of an ever-increasing feeling of intimacy with Jesus, and ever-increasing holiness in life. These ideas were taught in different ways by different teachers. But



MEMORIA PRESS

CLASSICAL.
CHRISTIAN.
COMPLETE.

Everything you need to provide your student
with a classical Christian education.

————— MEMORIAPRESS.COM —————

ultimately the focus was more on the fruits of faith than on the Author of faith; on my subjective response of faith rather than the objective works of Christ on the Cross, and of the Holy Spirit in Word and Sacrament. I would know that I was living the Christian life by experiential progress.

The problem was, I didn't. I uttered not a syllable in a language other than English. Further, I was too acutely aware of my own sin to believe that I was becoming more holy, and I did not often have an emotional experience of intimacy with Christ. No amount of effort or prayer changed any of this. At times I even questioned my salvation.

When I was in my mid-30s, I began to study theology formally at Oxford University. I did so for three reasons. First, it was a professional or vocational move, because I was unhappy in my profession as a lawyer. Second, it was an attempt to find and secure my status before God. Specifically, I thought that I would be better off spiritually if I gave up my lucrative profession. As it turned out, after leaving the legal profession, I found myself just as prone to greed and envy as I was before. Thus, I still saw myself as wanting to be saved but unable to be faithful enough, and I saw God as apparently not wanting to help me. Thankfully, my third reason for the change was that I loved the history of Christian thought, and hoped to find clarity by studying it. By God's grace I not only found clarity, but peace.

I was approaching age 40 when God made clear to me how truly profound and extensive the Gospel of His love is. I found that my anxiety and fear had resulted not from an indifferent God, but from my own anemic view of His love. The turning point came in an unlikely setting but from a very likely source. The unlikely setting was that I needed a topic for an essay in my masters program. A friend encouraged me to write on Luther and the third use of the law. My

research took me down that road and straight to the likely source, Luther's *On the Freedom of a Christian*.

Through Luther's unpacking of Scripture, God showed me that my emphasis on experience was keeping me bound to the law. He taught me to look to Christ crucified, rather than my own emotions or holiness, for assurance of my salvation. He taught me that my sin should drive me to the foot of the Cross for forgiveness, rather than to the next redoubling of my own efforts to escape sin. My efforts should be for the sake of my neighbor, whom I am called to serve. In short, the handcuffs of the law fell from my wrists.

Soon afterward, I read the Formula of Concord in order to learn in detail what Lutherans believe about Scripture. What I saw there was one faithful and reliable interpretation of Scripture after another. I especially appreciated that, where Scripture does not provide a clear answer, the authors of the Formula were content to accept the mystery, rather than speculating about what the answer must be. After this, I went through formal catechesis at the Oxford Lutheran Mission, and became Lutheran shortly after my 40th birthday. My wife, a cradle Missouri-Synod Lutheran, was thrilled.

Doctrine, it turns out, is not dry or lifeless. It is not a mere distraction from all-important experience; it is the stuff of eternal life. True biblical doctrine tells us how complete and objectively reliable the grace of God is in raising us out of our spiritual death, into the life of Christ. Right doctrine provides firm ground for the believer. That firm ground is the objective truth of Christ crucified and risen for us.

Anglicanism today, like many strands of modern Christianity, does not see that the objective truth of the Gospel is the essence of the life of faith. Instead, Anglicanism sees that life as centered on the believer's subjective experience. I never could find the peace that passes understanding in the highs and lows of

my emotions, or my perceptions of my own holiness. For me, that ground was simply too shaky, too unreliable. I found myself at times on the brink of despair. What Lutheranism has given me is the firm, objective reality of the Cross of Christ, with all the clarity of Law and Gospel presented there. In the Cross, God has given me peace.



Dr. Russell Dawn is president-elect of Concordia University Chicago. He previously served as professor of History and Political Thought, and director of the Pre-Law program at Concordia University Irvine. He holds a Doctorate of Philosophy from Oxford University, and a J.D. and M.B.A. from the University of Colorado.



“The Parable of the Buried Treasure,” is available as a giclée print in various sizes at edriojasartist.com

EDWARD RIOJAS ARTIST-ILLUSTRATOR

Commissions for the Sanctuary • Originals • Signed Giclée Prints

Website: edriojasartist.com • Facebook: Edward Riojas - Artist

Contact Lutheran artist, Edward Riojas, when considering confessional artistic needs – from logos and murals to processional crucifixes and altarpieces.

“He Remembers The Barren,” (right) by Edward Riojas, is a signed giclée print exclusively offered by Emmanuel Press.

Available sizes: 14.7” x 18” and 19.5” x 24”

Go to emmanuelpress.us for details.



EMMANUEL PRESS

Theological books and greeting cards since 2004



Find a Church

ALABAMA

Hope Lutheran Church
Rev. R. Daniel Carlson
4800 Montevallo Road
Birmingham, AL 35210
205-956-1930

Redeemer Lutheran Church
Rev. William Parsons III
200 S. Section Street
Fairhope, AL 36532
251-928-8397

ARIZONA

Atonement Lutheran
Rev. David Haught
4001 W. Beardsley Road
Glendale, AZ 85308
623-582-8785

Redeemer Lutheran (ELS)
Rev. David Jay Webber
7670 E. Jomax Road
Scottsdale, AZ 85266
480-621-7394

Catalina Lutheran
Rev. Michael Morehouse
15855 N. Twin Lakes Drive
Tucson, AZ 85739
520-825-9255

CALIFORNIA

Faith Lutheran
Rev. Jeremy Rhode
34381 Calle Portola
Capistrano Beach, CA 92624
949-496-1901

Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran
Rev. Donald Jordan
750 Moss Avenue
Chico, CA 95926
530-342-6085

Lutheran Church of Our Savior
Rev. Dennis Bestul
Rev. John Bestul
5825 Bollinger Road
Cupertino, CA 95014
408-252-0345

Gloria Dei Lutheran
Rev. Jeffrey Horn
1087 W. Country Club Lane
Escondido, CA 92026
760-743-2478

Peace Lutheran
Rev. Gregory Young
4672 North Cedar Avenue
Fresno, CA 93726
559-222-2320

The Good Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Bruce von Hindenburg
902 Maple Street
Inglewood, CA 90301
310-671-7644

St. Paul's Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Alfonso Espinosa
Rev. Dr. Steven Mueller
12500 Sand Canyon Avenue
Irvine, CA 92618
949-599-4760

St. Paul's Lutheran
Rev. Mark Pierson
2283 Palo Verde Avenue
Long Beach, CA 90815
562-596-4409

Our Savior's Lutheran
Rev. Clinton Hoff
725 N. Fairview Street
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
706-375-7921

Holy Cross Lutheran
Rev. Todd Peperkorn
4701 Grove Street
Rocklin, CA 95677
916-624-8185

Prince of Peace Lutheran
Rev. Paul Willweber
6801 Easton Court
San Diego, CA 92120
619-583-1436

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Matthew Payne
922 San Dimas Avenue
San Dimas, CA 91773
909-394-4555

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Martin Noland
Rev. FRank Balgeman
2825 Alameda De Las Pulgas
San Mateo, CA 94403
650-345-9068

COLORADO

Risen Christ Lutheran
Rev. Robert Macina
14850 W. 72nd Avenue
Arvada, CO 80007
303-421-5872

Mount Zion Lutheran
Rev. Carlton Hein
750 Cantril Street
Castle Rock, CO 80104
303-688-9550

University Hills Lutheran
Rev. David Vanderhyde
4949 E. Eastman Avenue
Denver, CO 80222
303-759-0161

Christ Our Savior Lutheran
Rev. Geoffrey Wagner
4022 Park Lane
Elizabeth, CO 80107
303-646-1378

DELAWARE

Concordia Lutheran
Rev. David Kummer
3003 Silverside Road
Wilmington, DE 19810
302-478-3004

FLORIDA

Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
Rev. George Poulos Jr.
7601 SW 39th Street
Davie, FL 33328
954-475-0683

Hope Lutheran Church
Rev. Dr. Mark Moreno
4541 N. Wickham Road
Melbourne FL, 32935
321-622-6126

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Keith Lingsch
Rev. Mark Eisold
860 Banyon Blvd.
Naples, FL 34102
239-261-7421

Immanuel Lutheran Church
Rev. Randy Blankschaen
24 W. Wright Street
Pensacola, FL 32501
850-438-8138

GEORGIA

Living Faith Lutheran
Rev. Timothy Droegemueller
Rev. Aaron Simms
1171 Atlanta Hwy
Cumming, GA 30040
770-887-0184

Trinity Lutheran Church
Rev. Jeffrey Webb
12391 Mercy Blvd
Savannah, GA 31419
912-925-4839

IDAHO

Good Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Tim Pauls
5009 Cassia Street
Boise, ID 83705
208-343-7212

Our Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. David Reeder
407 S. Hayes
Emmett, ID 83617
208-365-5231

Peace Lutheran
Rev. Paul Johnson
600 Stevens Street
P.O. Box 33
Filer, ID 83328
208-326-5450

Augustana Lutheran
Rev. Jonathon Krenz
(Meets at 7th Day Adventist Church)
1015 West C Street
Moscow, ID 83843
208-892-9224

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran
Rev. Neil Bloom
13541 W. Highway 53
Rathdrum, ID 83858
208-687-1809

ILLINOIS

Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. Marcus Manley
6351 N. 200th Street
Altamont, IL 62411
618-483-6756

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Jeff Caithamer
509 S. Mattis Avenue
Champaign, IL 61821
217-359-1123

First Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. James Kellerman
1649 West Le Moyne Street
Chicago, IL 60622
773-276-2338

Good Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Michael Walther
Rev. Scott Adle
1300 Belt Line Road
Collinsville, IL 62234
618-344-3151

Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Mark Bestul
535 N. McLean Blvd
Elgin, IL 60123
847-741-5433

Bethany Lutheran
Rev. Jeff Hemmer
5600 Old Collinsville Road
Fairview Heights, IL 62208
618-632-6906

Christ Our Savior Lutheran
Rev. Bruce Keseman
612 N. State Street
Freeburg, IL 62243
618-539-5664

Concordia Lutheran
Rev. Stephen Mueller
316 S. Oakwood Avenue
Geneseo, IL 61254
309-944-3993

Hope Lutheran
Rev. Em. David Fielding
Rev. Alan Beuster
3715 Wabash Avenue
Granite City, IL 62040
618-876-7568

St. Paul Lutheran
Rev. Ben Ball
Rev. William Gleason
6969 W. Frontage Road
Worden, IL 62097
P.O. Box 247
Hamel, IL 62046
618-633-2209

St. Matthew Lutheran
Rev. Timothy Kinne
Rev. Edward Blonski
24500 North Old McHenry Road
Hawthorn Woods, IL 60047
847-438-7709

Messiah Lutheran
Rev. Karl Gregory
801 N. Madison Street
Lebanon, IL 62254
618-537-2300

St. Matthew Lutheran
Rev. Michael Gudgel
305 Lemont Street
Lemont, IL 60439
630-257-5000

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Peter Ill
Rev. Todd Wilken
503 E. Washington Street
Millstadt, IL 62260
618-476-3101

Holy Cross Lutheran
Rev. Wilfred Karsten
4107 21st Avenue
Moline, IL 61265
309-764-9720

Bethany Lutheran
Rev. Seth Clemmer
Rev. Stephen Schumacher
1550 Modaff Road
Naperville, IL 60565
630-355-2198

St. John's Lutheran
Rev. David Benning
300 E. Gibson Street
New Berlin, IL 62670
217-448-3190

Ascension Lutheran
Rev. Matthew Gunia
7429 N. Milwaukee Avenue
Niles, IL 60714
847-647-9867

Christ Lutheran
Rev. Jonathan Huehn
311 N. Hershey Road
Normal, IL 61761
309-452-5609

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Donald Pritchard
525 N. Cartwright
Pleasant Plains, IL 62677
217-626-1282

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Mark Brockhoff
1800 S. Rodenburg Road
Schaumburg, IL 60193
847-524-9746

Good Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Michael Schuermann
500 South Sherman Blvd
Sherman, IL 60193
847-524-9746

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Paul Hemenway
Rev. Jonathan Holmes
220 S. Second Street
Springfield, IL 62701
217-522-8151

INDIANA

Emanuel Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Ludwig
355 Shaffer Street
Arcadia, IN 46030
317-984-3651

Grace Lutheran
Rev. John Armstrong
3201 Central Avenue
Columbus, IN 47203
812-372-4859

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. David Petersen
Rev. Michael Frese
202 West Rudisill Blvd.
Fort Wayne, IN 46807
260-744-2585

Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Kurt Ebert
Rev. Josh Reifsteck
Rev. Udhayanesan Raji
6111 Shelby Street
Indianapolis, IN 46227
317-783-2000

St Paul's Lutheran
Rev. David Shadday
3932 Mi Casa Avenue
Indianapolis, IN 46237
317-787-4464

St Peter Lutheran
Rev. Seth Mierow
2525 E. 11th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46201
317-638-7245

St. Paul Lutheran
Rev. Peter Speckhard
8601 Harrison Avenue
Munster, IN 46321
219-836-6270

St Paul Lutheran
Rev. Michael Blodgett
1910 N. Berthaud Road
New Haven, IN 46774
260-749-5444

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Jordan McKinley
4413 South State Road 135
Vallonia, IN 47281
812-358-3225

IOWA

Holy Cross Lutheran
Rev. Kevin Johnson
1100 Market Street
Carlisle, IA 50047
515-989-3841

Our Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Michael Knox
904 Bluff Street
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
319-266-2509

St Paul Lutheran
Rev. Nathan Dudley
2463 State Hwy 2
Clarinda, IA 51632
712-542-1505

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Jeffrey Keuning
309 Marshall Street
P.O. Box 127
Dexter, IA 50070
515-729-2977

Our Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Kristian Kincaid
Rev. Jesse Cearlock
2145 John F. Kennedy Road
Dubuque, IA 52002
563-588-1247

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Don Erickson
5092 480th Street
Germantown, IA 51046
712-418-2637

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Alexander Post
1600 S. Center Street
Marshalltown, IA 50158
641-753-9565

Immanuel Lutheran
Rev. J.R. Wheeler
101 E. View Place
Osceola, IA 50213
641-342-3121

Faith Lutheran
Rev. David Menet
1555 W. Ridgeway Avenue
Waterloo, IA 50701
319-236-1771

KANSAS

Risen Savior Lutheran
Rev. Robert Weinkauff
14700 Leavenworth Road
Basehor, KS 66007
913-724-2900

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Dale Dumpert
800 E. 1st Street
McPherson, KS 67460-3614
620-241-1627

Augsburg Lutheran
Rev. J. W. Watson
13902 W. 67th Street
Shawnee, KS 66216
913-403-6194

Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Craig
308 N. Indiana Avenue
Sylvan Grove, KS 67481
785-526-7152

St John's Lutheran
Rev. Jon Bruss
Rev. D.M. Kerns
Rev. Roger Goetz
901 S.W. Fillmore Street
Topeka, KS 66606
785-354-7132

Grace Lutheran Church
Rev. Geoffrey Boyle
Rev. Daniel Metzger
3310 E. Pawnee Street
Wichita, KS 67218
316-685-6781

Trinity Lutheran Church
 Rev. Geoffrey Boyle
 Rev. Daniel Metzger
 611 S. Erie Street
 Wichita, KS 67211
 316-685-1571

KENTUCKY

Our Redeemer Lutheran
 Rev. Michael Huebner
 2255 Eastland Pkwy
 Lexington, KY 40505
 859-299-9615

Our Savior Lutheran
 Rev. Joshua Cook
 8305 Nottingham Pkwy
 Louisville, KY 40222
 502-426-1130

LOUISIANA

Redeemer Lutheran Church
 Rev. John Drosendahl
 22531 Hwy 1088
 Mandeville, LA 70448
 985-674-0377

MARYLAND

Zion Lutheran
 Rev. James Oester
 219 Cemetery Road
 Accident, MD 21520
 301-746-8170

Calvary Lutheran
 Rev. Kevin Barron
 2625 E. Northern Parkway
 Baltimore, MD 21214
 410-426-4301

St. Paul Lutheran
 Rev. William Stottlemeyer
 3738 Resley Road
 Hancock, MD 21750
 301-678-7180

MICHIGAN

Grace Lutheran
 Rev. Aaron Schian
 303 W. Ruth Street
 Auburn, MI 48611
 989-662-6161

Ascension of Christ Lutheran
 Rev. Daniel Grams
 16935 W. Fourteen Mile Road
 Beverly Hills, MI 48025
 248-644-8890

St Paul Lutheran of Good Harbor
 Rev. Robert Wurst Jr
 2943 S. Manitou Trail
 Cedar, MI 49621
 231-228-6888

Emmanuel Lutheran
 Rev. Joel Baseley
 Rev. Paul Wolff
 800 S. Military Street
 Dearborn, MI 48124
 313-565-4002

Redford Lutheran
 Rev. Raymond Parent II
 22159 Grand River Avenue
 Detroit, MI 48219
 313-535-3733

Zion Lutheran
 Rev. Mark Braden
 4305 Military Street
 Detroit, MI 48210
 313-894-7450

Epiphany Lutheran
 Rev. Ryan Beffrey
 4219 Park Lane
 Dorr, MI 49323
 616-681-0791

Immanuel Lutheran
 Rev. Mark Loest
 8220 E. Holland Road (M-46)
 Frankentrost, MI 48601
 989-754-0929

Our Savior Lutheran
 Rev. David Fleming
 Rev. North Sherrill, Jr.
 Rev. Jeremy Swem
 2900 Burton Street S.E.
 Grand Rapids, MI 49546
 616-949-0710

St John Lutheran
 246 N. Ridge Road
 Port Sanilac, MI 48469
 810-622-9653

St. John Lutheran
 Rev. Joshua Ball
 62657 North Avenue
 Ray, MI 48096
 586-749-5286

St. Paul Lutheran
 Rev. Steve Stolarczyk
 6356 Center Street
 Unionville, MI 48767
 989-674-8681

MINNESOTA

Immanuel Lutheran
 Rev. Donald Klatt
 160 210th Street S.W.
 Appleton, MN 56208
 320-394-2358

St. Paul Lutheran
 Rev. Peter Haugen
 128 Filmore Street SE
 Chatfield, MN 55923
 507-867-4604

St. John's Evangelical Lutheran
 Rev. Matthew Moss
 Rev. Matthew P. Johnson
 Rev. Steven C. Briel (retired)
 9141 County Road 101
 Corcoran, MN 55340
 763-420-2426

Mount Olive Lutheran
 Rev. Robert Franck
 2012 E. Superior Street
 Duluth, MN 55812
 218-724-2500

Immanuel Lutheran
 Rev. Donald Klatt
 510 Olivia Street
 Holloway, MN 56249
 320-394-2452

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. Donald Klatt
 1746 30th Street N.W.
 Holloway, MN 56249
 320-394-2308

St. John's Lutheran
 Rev. David Markworth
 60929 110th Street
 Hutchinson, MN 55350
 320-587-4853

St. Paul Lutheran
 1324 9th Street
 International Falls, MN 56649
 218-283-8642

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. Gregory Volbrecht
 47334 132nd Street
 Lewisville, MN 56060
 507-435-2434

Good Shepherd Lutheran
 Rev. James Stefanic
 1600 E. College Drive
 Marshall, MN 56258
 507-532-4857

Glory of Christ Lutheran
 Rev. Jeremiah Johnson
 Rev. Kyle Krueger
 Rev. John Fehrman
 Rev. Dean Weibel
 4040 Hwy 101 N.
 Plymouth, MN 55446
 763-478-6031

St Johns Lutheran
 Rev. Christopher Horton
 14385 Blaine Avenue E.
 Rosemount, MN 55068-5929
 651-423-2149

Redeemer Lutheran
 Rev. Bruce Timm
 2718 3rd Street N.
 St Cloud, MN 56303
 320-252-8171

MISSISSIPPI

Christ Lutheran
 Rev. Dr.. James Holowach
 4423 I-55 North
 Jackson, MS 39206
 601-366-2055

MISSOURI

Good Shepherd Lutheran
 Rev. Warren Woerth
 2211 Tenbrook Road
 Arnold, MO 63010
 636-296-1292

Lord of Life Lutheran
 Rev. Mark Below
 15750 Baxter Road
 Chesterfield, MO 63017
 636-532-0400

Mount Calvary Lutheran
 Rev. James Gier
 1215 Baldwin Lane
 Excelsior Springs, MO 64024
 816-637-9800

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. Rick Pettey
 601 Kingsbury Blvd
 Fredericktown, MO 63645
 573-783-2405

Zion Lutheran
 Rev. Rick Pettey
 601 County Road 202
 Gravelton, MO 63645
 573-783-2405

Immanuel Lutheran
 4203 Tracy Avenue
 Kansas City, MO 64110
 816-561-0561

Village Lutheran
 Rev. Dr.. Kevin Golden
 Rev. Dr.. Matthew Harrison
 9237 Clayton Road
 Ladue, MO 63124
 314-993-1834

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. David Oberdieck
 1300 Kent Drive
 Lebanon, MO 65536
 417-532-2717

Prince of Peace
 Rev. Dr. Mark Smith
 8646 New Sappington Road
 Saint Louis, MO 63126
 314-843-8448

St. Paul's Lutheran
 Rev. Steve Riordan
 955 Hwy 109
 Wildwood, MO 63038
 636-273-6239

MONTANA

St. John Lutheran
 Rev. Paul Shupe
 301 Vail Avenue
 Belfry, MT 59008
 406-662-3776

Christ The King Lutheran
 Rev. Ryan Wendt
 759 Newman Lane
 Billings, MT 59101-4742
 406-252-9250

St. Paul Lutheran
 Rev. Paul Shupe
 404 S. 3rd Street
 Bridger, MT 59014
 406-662-3776

Our Savior Lutheran
 Rev. Andrew Eckert
 184 Pine Hollow Road
 Stevensville, MT 59870
 406-777-5625

NEBRASKA

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. James Moshier
 1005 9th Street
 Arapahoe, NE 68922
 308-962-7667

Trinity Lutheran
 Rev. Jonathan Rathjen
 34 Alden Street
 Auburn, NE 68305
 402-274-4210

St. Paul's Lutheran
 Rev. Allen K. Strawn
 506 Main Street
 Bridgeport, NE 69336
 308-262-0424

Immanuel Lutheran
 Rev. Scott Porath
 1009 G Street
 Eagle, NE 68347
 402-781-2190

Peace Lutheran
 906 N. California Avenue
 Hastings, NE 68901
 402-462-9023

Good Shepherd Lutheran
 Rev. Clint Poppe
 Rev. Christopher Marande
 Rev. Luke Russert
 3825 Wildbriar Lane
 Lincoln, NE 68516
 402-423-7639

Redeemer Lutheran
 Rev. Mark Ebert
 Rev. Michael Brown
 510 S. 33rd Street
 Lincoln, NE 68510
 402-477-1710

Lamb of God Lutheran
 Rev. Philip Houser
 1414 South Washington
 Papillion, NE 68046
 402-934-9045

Zion Lutheran
 Rev. Craig Niemeier
 1653 Worms Road
 Saint Libory, NE 68872
 308-687-6314

NEVADA

Grace Lutheran
 Rev. Douglas Barnett
 2657 W. Horizon Ridge Pkwy
 Henderson, NV 89052
 702-492-4701

NEW MEXICO

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Brian Kachelmeier
2000 Diamond Drive
Los Alamos, NM 87544
505-412-9682

NEW YORK

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Timmothy Heath Jr
3917 Waverly Road
Owego, NY 13827
607-687-1205

Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer
Rev. William Terjesen
714 Hudson Avenue
Peekskill, NY 10566
914-293-0081

Trinity Lutheran Church
Rev. Gordon Naumann
23 Crane Road
Scarsdale, NY 10583
914-723-1998

NORTH CAROLINA

Our Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Tod Rappe
1605 Van Buren Avenue
Fayetteville, NC 28303
910-488-6010

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Olson
3353 US 176 North
Tryon, NC 28782
828-859-0379

NORTH DAKOTA

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Matthew Richard
420 1st Street S.E.
Gwinner SD 58040
701-678-2401

OHIO

Zion Evangelical Lutheran
Rev. Wesley Hromowyk
766 High Street
Columbus, OH 43206
614-444-3456

St. Timothy Lutheran
Rev. Joel Sutton
5040 Rye Drive
Dayton, OH 45424
937-233-2443

Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. Keith Witte
1240 S. Maple Avenue
Fairborn, OH 45324
937-878-0651

Immanuel Lutheran
Rev. Kevin Jud
1285 Main Street
Hamilton, OH 45013
513-893-6792

Immanuel Lutheran
Rev. Michael Phillips
2120 Lakewood Avenue
Lima, OH 45805
419-222-2541

St. Pauls Lutheran
Rev. Paul Schlueter
7960 State Route 38
Millford Center, OH 43045
937-349-2405

Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. Robert Green
7500 State Road
Parma, OH 44134
440-845-2230

Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran
Rev. John Rutz
13101 Five Point Road
Perrysburg, OH 43551
419-874-6939

St. John Lutheran
Rev. James Haugen
8888 Prospect Road
Strongsville, OH 44136
440-234-5806

Hope Lutheran
Rev. Benjamin Meyer
15370 Meredith State Road
Sunbury, OH 43074
740-965-1685

OKLAHOMA

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Christian Tiews
1314 E. 6th Street
Okmulgee, OK 74447
918-756-6046

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Hall
2331 E. 5th Place
Tulsa, OK 74104
918-592-2999

OREGON

Holy Cross Lutheran
Rev. Alexander Lange
2515 Queen Avenue S.E.
Albany, OR 97322
541-928-0214

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Eric Lange
795 E. Powell Blvd
Gresham, OR 97030
503-665-5414

Reformation Lutheran (ELS)
Rev. Steven Brockdorf
4435 S.E. Tualatin Valley Hwy
Hillsboro, OR 97123
503-648-1393

Faith Lutheran
Rev. Evan Goeglein
8582 Rogue River Hwy.
Rogue River, OR 97537
541-582-0457

PENNSYLVANIA

Prince of Peace Lutheran
Rev. Michael Podeszwa
60 Rochester Road
Freedom, PA 15042
724-728-3881

Mt. Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Adam Koontz
308 Petersburg Road
Lititz, PA 17543
717-560-6751

Logos Lutheran
Rev. Rob Kieselowsky
628 N. Broad Street
Philadelphia, PA 19130
215-992-9102

Mount Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Scott Kuntz
285 Highland Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15229
412-931-4500

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Robert Kieselowsky
25 E. Scenic Road
Springfield, PA 19064
610-543-3100

Grace Lutheran
Rev. David Young
1169 W. Street Road
Warminster, PA 18974
215-672-8181

SOUTH DAKOTA

Mount Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Matthew Wurm
629 9th Avenue
Brookings, SD 57006
605-692-2678

Peace Lutheran Church
Rev. David Lindenberg
219 E. Saint Anne Street
Rapid City, SD 57701
605-721-6480

Christ Lutheran
Rev. Matthew Nix
4801 E. 6th Street
Sioux Falls, SD 57110
605-338-3769

TENNESSEE

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Larry Peters
Rev. Daniel Ulrich
2041 Madison Street
Clarksville, TN 37043
931-647-6750

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. Philip Young
800 Bellevue Road
Nashville, TN 37221-2702
615-646-3150

St. Paul Lutheran
Rev. Robert Portier
1610 Pullen Road
Sevierville, TN 37862
865-365-8551

TEXAS

St Paul Lutheran
Rev. Bryan Wolfmuehler
3501 Red River Street
Austin, TX 78705
512-472-8301

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Paul Harris
1207 W. 45th
Austin, TX 78756
512-453-3835

Bethel Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Baden
1701 N. Broadway
Ballinger, TX 76821
325-942-9275

Divine Savior Lutheran Church
Rev. Randall Wehmeyer
405 Ingram Road
Devine, Texas 78016
830-663-3735

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Carl Roth
801 W. 11th Street
Elgin, TX 78621
512-281-3367

Mount Calvary Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Baden
12358 Country Road 5500
Eola, TX 76937
325-942-9275

Redeemer Lutheran
Rev. David Grassley
4513 Williams Road
Fort Worth, TX 76116
817-560-0030

Holy Shepherd Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Bramich
1500 FM 156 S
Haslet, TX 76052
817-439-2100

Memorial Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Scott Murray
Rev. Sagar Pilli
Rev. Dr. Christopher Ahlman
Rev. Ian Pacey
Rev. Robert Paul
5800 Westheimer
Houston, TX 77057
713-782-6079

Our Savior Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Laurence White
Rev. Robert Hull
Rev. Kelly Krieg
5000 West Tidwell Road
Houston, TX 77091
713-290-9087

Messiah Lutheran
Rev. Tom Chryst
1308 Whitley Road
Keller, TX 76248
817-431-2345

Pilgrim Lutheran
Rev. Dr. Jayson Galler
713 Florey Street
Kilgore, TX 75662
903-984-4333

Bethlehem Lutheran
Rev. Randall Smith
5084 Church Lane
North Zulch, TX 77872
936-399-5563

Faith Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Baden
801 1st Street
Ozona, TX 76943
325-942-9275

Faith Lutheran
Rev. James Woelmer
Rev. Robert Hill
Rev. Mark Taylor
Rev. Steve Kieser
Rev. Kurt Ulmer
1701 E. Park Blvd
Plano, TX 75074
972-423-7447

Lord of Life Lutheran
Rev. Joel Shaltanis
3601 W. 15th Street
Plano, TX 75075
972-867-5588

Trinity Lutheran
Rev. Allan Eckert
3536 Lutheran Way
San Angelo, TX 76904
325-944-8660

Mount Calvary Lutheran
Rev. David Reedy
Rev. Craig Meissler
308 Mount Calvary Drive
San Antonio, TX 78209
210-824-8748

St. John Lutheran
Rev. L. Lynn Lubke
1000 N. Crockett Street
San Benito, TX 78568
956-399-3422

Hope Lutheran
Rev. Thomas Baden
417 E. 2nd Street
Sonora, TX 76950
325-942-9275

St Mark Lutheran
Rev. Peter Kolb
2000 Clay Avenue
Waco, TX 76706
254-754-0644

VIRGINIA

Immanuel Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Esget
Rev. Peter Eckardt
1801 Russell Road
Alexandria, VA 22301
703-549-0155

St. Athanasius Lutheran
Rev. James Douthwaite
114 Kingsley Road S.W.
Vienna, VA 22180
703-455-4003

Our Savior Lutheran
Rev. Gregory Cumbee
2800 Millwood Pike
Winchester, VA 22602
540-667-1459

WASHINGTON

Peace Lutheran
Rev. Daniel Freeman
Rev. Larry Bergman
2071 Bishop Road
Chehalis, WA 98532
360-748-4108

Immanuel Lutheran
Rev. Kyle Heck
2531 Lombard Avenue
Everett, WA 98201
425-252-7038

Messiah Lutheran
Rev. Kurt Onken
9209 State Avenue
Marysville, WA 98270
360-659-4112

Messiah Lutheran
Rev. Trevor Mankin
7050 35th Avenue N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115-5917
206-524-0024

Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran
Rev. Kerry Reese
Rev. Warrens Berger
9225 212th Street S.E.
Snohomish, WA 98296
360-668-7881

Beautiful Savior Lutheran
Rev. Ryan Tinetti
4320 S. Conklin Street
Spokane, WA 99203
509-747-6806

Hope Lutheran
Rev. Craig Wulf
17909 E. Broadway Avenue
Spokane Valley, WA 99016
509-924-1630

Parkland Lutheran (ELS)
Rev. Glenn Obenberger
Rev. Samuel Gullixson
Rev. Steven Sparley
Rev. Alex Ring
120 123rd Street S.
Tacoma, WA 98444
253-537-5492

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Jeffrey Ries
3410 Sixth Avenue
Tacoma, WA 98406
253-752-1264

WISCONSIN

St. John's Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Jackson
E 5221 Church Road
Algoma, WI 54201
920-487-2335

St. Peter's Lutheran
Rev. Christopher Amen
303 Park Street
Arlington, WI 53911
608-635-4825

Zion Lutheran
Rev. Tim Jones
110 E Grand Avenue
Chippewa Falls, WI 54729
715-723-6380

Elm Grove Lutheran
Rev. Eric Skovgaard
Rev. Matthew Peters
945 N. Terrace Drive
Elm Grove, WI 53122
262-797-2970

Mount Zion Lutheran
Rev. Aaron Koch
3820 W. Layton Avenue
Greenfield, WI 53221
414-282-4900

Messiah Lutheran
Rev. James Roemke
2026 22nd Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53140
262-551-8182

Mount Olive Lutheran
Rev. Jason Zobel
Rev. Dan Anderson
110 N. Whitney Way
Madison, WI 53705
608-238-5656

Faith Lutheran Church and
Preschool
Rev. Michael Mathey
4009 Irving Street
Marinette, WI 54143
715-735-6506

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Bruce Zigel
450 Bridge Street
Mayville, WI 53050
920-387-3568

St. John Lutheran
Rev. Mark Eckert
N683 County Road S
New Fane (Kewaskum), WI 53040
262-626-2309

Grace Lutheran
Rev. Brian Crane
3700 Washington Avenue
Racine, WI 53405
262-633-4831

St. John's Lutheran
Rev. Jacob Gilbert
Rev. Dan Feldscher
510 Kewaunee Street
Racine, WI 53402
262-637-7011

St. Jakobi Lutheran
Rev. Travis Kleinschmidt
W 8089 County Road A
Shawano, WI 54166
715-524-4347

Luther Memorial Chapel and
University Student Center
Rev. Michael Larson
3833 N. Maryland Avenue
Shorewood, WI 53211
414-332-5732

Peace Lutheran
Rev. Peter Bender
Rev. Gary Gehlbach
W240 N6145 Maple Avenue
Sussex, WI 53089
262-246-3200

Our Savior Lutheran Church

Rev. Michael Henrichs
 Rev. Dr. John Wohlrabe
 6021 N Santa Monica Blvd
 Whitefish Bay, WI 53217
 414-332-4458

WYOMINGTrinity Lutheran

Rev. Jon Olson
 1240 S. Missouri Avenue
 Casper, WY 82609
 307-234-0568

Zion Lutheran

Rev. Jakob Berger
 601 S. 9th Street
 Douglas, WY 82633
 307-358-2810

Redeemer Lutheran

Rev. David Bott
 175 N. Willow Street
 Jackson, WY 83001
 307-733-3409

CANADABethel Lutheran

Rev. Jamie Bosma
 264 Wilson Street
 Thunder Bay ON P7B1M9
 807-344-8322



Issues, Etc. is a registered trademark of Lutheran Public Radio, 1600 Golfview Dr, Suite 230 Collinsville, IL 62234.
 Studio Line: (877) 623-MYIE
 Comment Line: (618) 223-8382
 Office Line: (618) 223-8385
talkback@issuesetc.org
 Twitter: @IssuesEtc

© 2019, Lutheran Public Radio