

LIFELINES

of

LORD OF LIFE LUTHERAN CHURCH

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[A version of this article appeared 11 years ago. I am republishing it because our new beautification committee will be gathering ideas this month about how to update and redecorate our narthex and sanctuary. One of the ideas we will consider is whether new artwork should tie-in to the name *Lord of Life*.]

What's in a name?

Why was our congregation given the name "Lord of Life?" What does it mean and how was it chosen? As you probably know, the exact phrase "Lord of Life" is not found in the Scriptures (at least not in any translation I am aware of) so the choosing of the name has been something of a curiosity for me. But the curiosity recently changed to something more like an investigation.

Recently, [in 2014] I was discussing the idea of coming up with a logo for the church. Something to put on our webpage and stationery would be nice and a sharp attractive icon or symbol might be valuable in advertising as well. But in order to do this, I thought it would be helpful to understand where the name *Lord of Life* came from. What was it meant to signify? I had a couple of ideas about the name's origin but nothing concrete about why it was actually chosen. A few months ago; however, I thought I might be able to finally clear this up.

Gary Schenke, one of the founding members of Lord of Life, happened by the church office one day, so I asked him about the name of the church. "Why Lord of Life?" I asked. "Was it chosen with the Third Article of the Nicene Creed in mind?" [I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life...] This would imply that the name recalls how the Holy Spirit converts us from death to life, from unbelief to faith. But perhaps it was chosen for a different reason, something along the lines of living a sanctified life, i.e. "Jesus is the Lord of my life?" Gary smiled and told me he remembers that the name was chosen at a meeting in his living room years ago and yet he could not remember why it was chosen. So, a little while after this, I decided to call Pastor McMillan to talk to him about it.

What a nice man! We enjoyed a long conversation about a number of things, but when we got to the subject of naming the church, he too was uncertain about why exactly it was chosen. He remembered the name was liked because there weren't any other "Lord of Life" churches in the area and because it was alluded to in different ways, as in the Nicene Creed and certain hymns. Nevertheless, he couldn't recall the exact origin, so the mystery remained a little while longer.

Then, on a tired afternoon after a very busy week, I happened upon some old VHS tapes in the church library. The tapes captured some of the milestone events in the life of our church. For example, there is the first worship service, various Christmas programs and other such events documenting some of the earliest days of our congregation. Among these, one tape stood out as particularly interesting. This particular tape records the meeting where the name "Lord of Life" was chosen for our congregation.

Dated September 1985, it records a meeting in which Pastor Ric McMillan leads a discussion about possible names for the new church. While the camera remains focused upon Pastor McMillan and an overhead projector the entire time, I assume the meeting took place at Mr. Schenke's living room as he said. I don't know for sure, but judging from the voices on the tape, I suspect there were only a handful of people present.

The presentation begins with several names put forth for the people to consider. "Beneath the Cross" was one of the names, as was "Living Lord" and a few others. After each name was presented to the congregation, Pastor McMillan listed some Scripture passages as the basis for each name. When he came to "Lord of Life" he mentioned two passages: John 5:21, "**For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will.**" and John 11:25-26, "**I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, even though he dies, yet shall he live. And whoever lives and believes in me will never die.**" After this, the discussion continued with people weighing the merits of each name and eventually eliminating one after another. Finally, someone asked about "Lord of Life" and specifically, the second passage mentioned in connection with it. John 11:25-26 was read again and the group voted to accept "Lord of Life" as the name of our church.

Mystery solved: The name "Lord of Life" comes from one of the most beautiful passages in the Bible, John 11:25-26. Knowing this, let me invite you to ponder this passage whenever you consider the name "Lord of Life." Let me further invite you to consider how we can capture this hope in Jesus who is the Resurrection and the Life in a fitting new design for the church.

Blessings in the name of the Lord of Life who promises all who believe in Him that even though they die, yet shall they live. And whoever lives and believes in Him, will never die!

Pastor Shaltanis



New Additions to the Library

CPH has a great sale going on, so I thought it a good opportunity to add several new volumes to the church library. They are as follows:

Devotionals, Prayers:

Through Faith Alone – From the publisher’s website: “Freshly translated from the original German into today’s English, this book contains devotionals taken from Martin Luther’s writings and sermons between 1513 and 1546. Conveniently divided into daily readings, this devotional will point you to Christ and a deeper understanding of faith.”

Starck’s Prayer Book – A classic prayer and devotional book by a 17th century Lutheran clergyman that has been expanded and updated for the 21st century.

Witness to the Light – A collection of 365 daily devotions for adults by Stephen J. Carter. Each devotion includes Scripture readings and prayers.

The Lord Will Answer – A daily devotional based on Luther’s Small Catechism and centered on the Church Year. Each short devotion contains a prayer from the Scriptures or the Church fathers.

Simple books for the whole family on various themes of Worship:

Ordering Our Days in His Peace by Scott Kinnaman

Worshipping with Angels and Arch Angels by Curtis Heath

Behold the Lamb of God by Pam Nielsen

All three are richly illustrated books that teach the basics about the Divine Service, the Church Year, and Christian Symbols used in worship. They can also be used by the family for short informative devotions.

Current topics:

Faith and Science in a Skeptical Age - Edited by Jesse Yow, this is a collection of essays on current topics concerning science and faith.

Christian Ethics in the Workplace – This book by Raymond Hilgert offers an overview of Christian ethics along with a series of ethical studies based on situations commonly encountered in the workplace. It is written by Lutheran laymen who have worked in business for years and would be an excellent book for a small group Bible study.

Holy People, Holy Lives, Law and Gospel in Bioethics – Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer. From the publisher’s webpage: “In short, concise chapters, the author guides readers through the process of making ethical decisions from a Law/Gospel perspective. Eyer’s easy-to-read style helps readers focus on the issues and dilemmas that confront people in this modern, high-tech age, including reproductive technology and end-of-life issues. In the course of the discussion, Eyer presents biblical and Gospel insights into living as God’s holy people, redeemed in Christ.”

Godly and Girly: your life in a crazy, messy, confusing world - By Lacy Marsh “For ages 15 and up, this book inspires and encourages young women by teaching that they are created in God’s image and are beautiful in Him. Girls will gain confidence to be realistic about their body image and secure in their identity as God’s beloved daughters. Body image, self-esteem, friends, the future, and more are addressed in short chapters.”

Lutheran Theology:

Lift High This Cross: The Theology of Martin Luther - By Eugene Klug “This book introduces Luther’s faith and theology from his evangelical breakthrough in the 1510s to his last major writings on Scripture and the church. The author explores the central features of Luther’s presentation of the Christian faith, illustrating how Luther interpreted God’s Word and applied it to a variety of issues in the church during the sixteenth century.”

The Lutheran Difference 500th Anniversary of the Reformation – This 700 page work is a collection of Bible Studies formerly published separately, on how Lutheran theology is distinct from that of other Churches. The book deals with a variety of topics and the updated 500th Anniversary of the Reformation edition offers more tools and cross reference material for study.

Church History:

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism – By Thomas von Hagel. “This book, a collection of short, 1-2 page biographies, offers a means to understand history through the “heroes” of the Christian faith as they confessed the truths of Christ and His teachings. It includes an introduction to the role of the saints in the Church from a Lutheran perspective, the relation between Christian lives, and the life of Christ.”



ELDERS: Welcome and Well Done

On Sunday October 26th, we celebrated the Reformation and installed our newest elder, Eric Wilde. Eric grew up at Lord of Life and has been a faithful Lutheran throughout his life. He is an excellent addition to our board and brings with him wisdom from a younger generation.

Coinciding with Eric's arrival to the Board of Elders is the retirement of Tom Read. Tom has been a rock-solid elder for nearly a decade. If you or a loved one has been in the hospital or nursing home, you already know this because Tom's special gift is visitation. He loved to sit and pray with the sick and the dying. He comforted many people with his presence over the last decade. Tom brought many other gifts to the board with his years of wisdom from the business world as well. At age 75 and with a new elder coming on the board, Tom decided it was time to retire. Many thanks to Tom for so many years of faithful service.





A Letter from Our Deaconess Intern

The Saints and their Rest

“For all the Saints, who from their labors rest...” This familiar hymn is the hymn of the day for the feast of All Saints’ Day. We sing about the Saints and how they fought their battles here on earth and are welcomed into the glorious rest that is found in Christ Jesus. But what does it mean to rest? Does it mean that the Saints are just hanging out in heaven and waiting around for the Second Coming, where we all will be at rest with them? Or is there more to rest than what initially meets the eye?

Rest is one of those tricky concepts because our idea of rest and the biblical idea of rest don’t always seem to align. Traditionally, Sabbath meant to cease from labor, as the word literally translates to “to rest.” In Old Testament Judaism, this meant the complete stop of all manual labor so that man and his animals could have a day to recover and not be beaten down by endless labor. (Exodus 20:8-11; Luther’s Large Catechism, p. 32) In the New Testament, this practice morphed into absolutely no manual labor whatsoever on the Sabbath. There were strict rules governing what people could and could not do in order to uphold the Third Commandment and maintain their holiness, so that their righteousness would be evident to those around them. Then, Christ came and seemingly flipped all of this “no labor” stuff on its head. He healed the sick and allowed His disciples to pluck grain from the field when they were hungry, even on the Sabbath. Isn’t that work? That’s what the Pharisees thought, but Jesus rebuked them and told them that they had missed the point of what Sabbath rest meant. (Matthew 12:11-13; Mark 2:23-28)

Well, if rest doesn't mean “no labor,” then what does it mean? To answer this, let’s think about the Third Commandment and Luther’s explanation found in the Large Catechism. Luther tells us that rest doesn’t simply mean refraining from outward labor, as it did in the Old Testament. Rest means we have the freedom to put aside our daily struggles, attend Church to hear the Word of God, and to praise God through our hymns and prayers. (Luther’s Large Catechism, p. 33) We come to church to hear about our rest that is given to us in Christ Jesus through the preaching and teaching of the Word and the reception of the Sacraments. There is no work that we can do to earn this rest. It is a gift Christ freely gives through his suffering, death, and resurrection, and in that gift, we have the freedom to worship. The rest that we receive is not only a physical rest, but rest from our self-imposed spiritual tasks of trying to obtain righteousness and salvation through our own work that our sinful nature demands. Sabbath rest removes us from the *I-can-do-it-myself* attitude that our Old Adam begs of us and instead places us in the hands of a *Come-to-Me,-all-who-labor-and-are-heavy-laden,-and-I-will-give-you-rest* God. Rest is worship, and worship is rest.

So, what does this mean for us on this side of eternity and the Saints in glory? In worship, we get a glimpse of the rest that those who have gone before us experience in the presence of Christ. While our rest is fleeting, marred by sin, the rest of the Saints is made perfect. The hymn, *Behold a Host, Arrayed in White*, puts it this way: “*They now serve God both day and night; they sing their songs in endless light. Their anthems ring As they all sing With angels shining bright... On earth they wept through bitter years; Now God has wiped away their tears, Transformed their strife to heav’nly life, and freed them from their fears. They now enjoy the Sabbath rest, The heav’nly banquet of the blest; the Lamb, their Lord, At festive board Himself is host and guest... The myriad angels raise their song; O saints, sing with that happy throng! Lift up one voice; Let heav’n rejoice In our Redeemer’s song!*”

When we come to church, we are singing with the Saints, awaiting that day when we, too, will join that heavenly band in perfect rest through Christ. Lift up your voice and sing, “Holy Holy Holy!” to the Lamb who has bought this rest for you with His blood on the cross that was promised to you in Baptism. Our rest is in a present God who even now shields you and saves you, even if the years and tears are bitter. Rest is now, and rest is for you.

Pointing to the Rock of Ages

*Not the labor of my hands Can fulfill Thy Law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite know, Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone; Thou must save, and Thou alone. (LSB 761:2)*

While the classic hymn “Rock of Ages” shows up in the Lutheran Service Book in the “Hope and Comfort” section, it can also teach us a valuable lesson about Christian stewardship. If that surprises you, stay with me on this one.

No Lutheran would ever dispute the fact that our work does not save us. Ephesians 2 makes it truly clear that we are dead in our trespasses and sins and would remain in that state until Christ raises us by grace. There is not a ladder on which we can climb out of the grave that our sins have dug for us. No blood, sweat nor tears will be able to rescue us. We all know this.

Our works do not save. Christ’s work on the cross of Calvary does! He bore human flesh. He carried the burden of our sin to the cross. His body was beaten, bruised and bloodied for us. He has indeed atoned for us! This is more than enough reason for this hymn to be bouncing around in your head all day today!

But our work has a place. The place is in response to what the Father has done for us in Jesus. The Rock of Ages, who is Jesus, becomes the foundation on which our lives of faith are built. The Holy Spirit uses the means of grace to make us God’s workmanship that Paul talks about in Ephesians 2:10.

Our workmanship does not display our power or prowess. Like the heavens declare the handiwork of the Creator, the works of a redeemed sinner point others to the salvation that is worked only by Jesus alone. Our work is a response to and reflection of a grace and glory that we ourselves could never accomplish or achieve.

We become stewards of the treasure that is the Gospel. When we faithfully support the work of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with our financial support, we are doing the work which points to the One who alone atones. When we come alongside a struggling sister or brother for whom Christ died and we share the stewardship work of compassion and care, we en flesh the treasure of God’s love and redemption. When we make it a weekly priority to arrange our schedule to be in the Lord’s House with other stewards of the Gospel to receive again and again the Gospel’s precious gift, we are stewards of the Body of Christ in the congregation that points even more people to Jesus.

We cannot do this. Jesus does it through us. We are simply stewards of this precious treasure!

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod
LCMS Stewardship Ministry – <https://www.lcms.org/stewardship>
 Newsletter Article – November 2025





NOVEMBER

birthdays & anniversaries

- 1 Duncan Bennett
- 3 Jeff Loewecke
- 3 Sara Tweedie
- 6 Hannah Kade
- 9 Brooke Wilkerson
- 13 Ken Tabor
- 19 Thayne Rector
- 21 Stephani Cramer
- 21 Al Martin
- 21 Logan Montgomery
- 22 Linda Delzer
- 24 Tom Ashburn
- 25 Melissa Kunschke
- 26 Evelyn Buckmeier
- 28 Russ Wilkerson
- 28 Al & Norma Martin (68)
- 30 Arlene McDuffee
- 30 Haley Moore
- 30 Arlene Munden

Lord of Life Small Groups

EPIC PARENTING

- † For 30ish couples with kids
- † For info contact Ben Scarth
BenjaminScarth@yahoo.com
- † Usually meets one Sunday a month in the afternoon or evening

FRUITS OF THE VINE CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Scott Peters at 972-898-3351 cell or speters@planolutheran.com
- † Will meet Fri, November 21 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

GOOD NEWS CARE GROUP

- † For info contact Mike Kunschke at (847) 951-6974
- † Will meet Sat., November 8 at 6:30 PM for Bible study

YOUNG ADULTS

- † For those in their 20's and 30's
- † For info contact Lauren Moudy at laurenemoudy@gmail.com or (214) 415-8939
- † Will meet Sun, November 16 at 6 PM for Bible study and dinner



prepare for worship in november

November 2: All Saints' Day

Texts: Rev. 7:(2-8) 9-17; 1 John 3:1-3; Matt. 5:1-12
HotD: "For All the Saints," 677

November 9: Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Ex. 3:1-15; 2 Thess. 2:1-8, 13-17; Luke 20:27-40
HotD: "From God Can Nothing Move Me," 713

November 16: Twenty-Third Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Mal. 4:1-6; 2 Thess. 3:(1-5) 6-13; Luke 21:5-28 (29-36)
HotD: "The Day Is Surely Drawing Near," 508

November 23: Last Sunday of the Church Year

Texts: Mal. 3:13-18 Col. 1:13-20 Luke 23:27-43
HotD: "Lord, Enthroned in Heavenly Splendor," 534

November 27: Thanksgiving Eve, 7 PM

November 30: First Sunday in Advent

Texts: Is. 2:1-5; Rom. 13:(8-10) 11-14; Matt. 21:1-11 or Matt. 24:36-44
HotD: "Savior of the Nations, Come," 332



Puzzle!

In the New Testament, followers of Christ are called by many names. Use the hints to fill in the blanks. Need help? Check an NIV Bible for the missing letters.

D _____ s
(Acts 6:7)



C _____ n P _____ e
(1 Peter 2:9)



S _____ s of C _____ t
(1 Corinthians 4:1)

C _____ s
(Acts 11:26)

B _____ s and S _____ s
(1 Thessalonians 4:9-10)

B _____ s
(Acts 5:14)

W _____ s
(Acts 1:8)

