

Announcements

- ◆ A warm welcome to all our visitors and guests, friends both old and new. We pray that God has blessed your time among us with His Word and Holy Spirit. We cordially invite you to join us this morning for coffee and other refreshments downstairs following the Divine Service; and we ask that you please sign the guest book at the back of the church.
- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments, our Family Bible Class continues our study of Genesis, relying especially on Dr. Luther's extensive commentary on that sacred text. Parents and children, youth and adults are welcome.

Catechesis class for younger and beginning catechumens meets at the same time. Also, Mike Jindra and Ian Walsh are teaching a catechesis class for children of approximately eight through twelves years of age. And Dave Smith is teaching a catechesis class for teenagers (and others interested).
- ◆ The Sacred Season of Lent begins this week on Ash Wednesday (18 Feb). There will be opportunities for the imposition of ashes on that day, either in the morning (9:00 a.m.) or shortly before the Divine Service that evening (6:30 p.m.). There will also be opportunities, throughout the Season, for the Word of God and prayer, and for the celebration of the Sacrament. Watch the upcoming Announcements and the monthly calendar for days and times.
- ◆ The flowers on the Altar this morning are provided by Pastor & LaRena Stuckwisch to the glory of God, in loving memory of their son Job, and with thanksgiving for their daughter Katharina.
- ◆ **COLLECTIONS FOR 8 FEBRUARY 2015:** \$ 2,498.00
In order to meet our financial obligations and commitments, an average of \$2240 is needed each week.
- ◆ **IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:**
(ELDER) Dave Smith; (USHERS) Aaron Seyboldt & Caleb Smith;
(ACOLYTE) Lucas Jindra; (ORGANIST) Deaconess Sandra Rhein;
(GREETERS) Carrol McCarty & Pat Nering.
- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

From the Lutheran Confessions

“Article XXIV. The Mass: In our Confession we have stated our position that the Lord’s Supper does not grant grace ex opere operato and does not merit for others, whether living or dead, forgiveness of sins or of guilt or of punishment ex opere operato. This position is established and proved by the impossibility of our obtaining the forgiveness of sins ex opere operato through our works, and by the necessity of faith to conquer the terrors of sins and death and to comfort our hearts with the knowledge of Christ; for His sake we are forgiven, His merits and righteousness are bestowed upon us. ‘Since we are justified by faith, we have peace’ (Rom. 5:1). This is so firm and sure that it can prevail against all the gates of hell.

“If this were the whole problem, the case would be settled. No sane person can approve this pharisaic and pagan notion about the working of the Mass ex opere operato. Yet this notion has taken hold among the people and has infinitely multiplied the Masses. With the work of these Masses they think they can placate God’s wrath, gain the remission of guilt and punishment, secure whatever they need in this life, and even free the dead. The monks and scholastics have brought this pharisaic notion into the church.

“Though we have already stated our case, we must add a few things because of the way our opponents have twisted many passages of Scripture in defense of their errors. The Confutation has a great deal to say about sacrifice, though in our Confession we purposely avoided this term because of its ambiguity. We have already described the current understanding of sacrifice among those whose abuses we criticize. Now we shall explain the passages of Scripture which they have distorted, and to do this we must first set down the nature of a sacrifice. For the last ten years our opponents have been publishing almost endless books about sacrifice, but none of them has defined it. They find the term ‘sacrifice’ in either the Scriptures or the Fathers and use it out of context, attaching their own ideas to it as if it meant whatever they want it to mean.

“Sacrifice, its Nature and Types: In Plato’s Phaedrus, Socrates says that he is very fond of distinctions because without them nothing can be explained or understood in a discussion, and that if he found someone skilled in making them he would follow in his footsteps as those of a god. He tells the person making the distinctions to cut the members at the joint, lest like an unskilled cook he sever the member at the wrong place. Plato would really call our opponents ‘poor cooks,’ for they despise these instructions and mutilate the various members of the concept ‘sacrifice,’ as our enumeration of the types of sacrifice will make clear.

“The theologians make a proper distinction between sacrament and sacrifice. The genus common to both could be ‘ceremony’ or ‘sacred act.’ A sacrament is a ceremony or act in which God offers us the content of the promise joined to the ceremony; thus Baptism is not an act which we offer to God but one in which God baptizes us through a minister functioning in His place. Here God offers and presents the forgiveness of sins according to the promise, ‘He who believes and is baptized will be saved’ (Mark 16:16). By way of contrast, a sacrifice is a ceremony or act which we render to God to honor Him.

“There are two, and only two, basic types of sacrifice. One is the propitiatory sacrifice; this is a work of satisfaction for guilt and punishment that reconciles God or placates His wrath or merits the forgiveness of sins for others. The other type is the eucharistic sacrifice; this does not merit the forgiveness of sins or reconciliation, but by it those who have been reconciled give thanks or show their gratitude for the forgiveness of sins and other blessings received.

“In this controversy as well as in many others, we must never lose sight of these two types of sacrifice and be very careful not to confuse them. If the limits of this book permitted, we would enumerate the many proofs for this distinction found in the Epistle to the Hebrews and elsewhere. All the Levitical sacrifices can be classified under one or another of these heads. The Old Testament called certain sacrifices propitiatory because of what they signified and foreshadowed. They did not merit the forgiveness of sins in the sight of God, but they did on the basis of the justice of the law; thus those for whom they were offered did not have to be excluded from the commonwealth. They were accordingly called propitiatory sacrifices for sin or burnt offerings for trespasses. The eucharistic sacrifices were the oblation, the drink offerings, the thank offering, the first fruits, and the tithes.

“There has really been only one propitiatory sacrifice in the world, the death of Christ, as the Epistle to the Hebrews teaches, ‘It is impossible that the blood of bulls and goats should take away sins’ (Heb. 10:4). A little later it says about the will of Christ, ‘By that will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all’ (Heb. 10:10). Isaiah interprets the law to mean that the death of Christ is a real satisfaction or expiation for our sins, as the ceremonies of the law were not; therefore he says, ‘When He makes Himself an offering for sin, He shall see His offspring, He shall prolong His days’ (Is. 53:10). The word he uses here (‘asam) means a victim sacrificed for transgression. In the Old Testament this meant that a victim was to come to reconcile God and make satisfaction for our sins, so that men might know that God does not want our own righteousness but the merits of another (namely, of Christ) to reconcile Him to us.”

(From the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, 1530)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY THE TRANSFIGURATION OF OUR LORD
Divine Service of Communion **9:00 a.m.**
Coffee & Refreshments Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY ***Vespers*** **6:00 p.m.**
Bible Class 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY *Pastor's Writing Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

ASH WEDNESDAY Corporate Confession / Ashes 9:00 a.m.
Imposition of Ashes 6:30 p.m.
Divine Service of Communion **7:00 p.m.**

THURSDAY *Pastor's Family Day (but do call in cases of emergency)*

FRIDAY ***Brief Spoken Divine Service*** **9:00 a.m.**

NEXT SUNDAY **Divine Service of Communion** **9:00 a.m.**
Coffee & Refreshments Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
Catechesis / Family Bible Class 10:45 a.m.

You may also want to keep in mind, in your observance of daily prayer at home:

The Appointed Readings for Ash Wednesday (18 February):
Joel 2:12–19; 2 Cor. 5:20—6:10; and St. Matt. 6:1–6, 16–21

The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the First Sunday in Lent:
Exodus 34:29–35; 2 Corinthians 3:7—4:6; and Saint Mark 9:2–9