

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.

- ◆ Pastor Stuckwisch is in Texas yet this weekend, where he has been enjoying a vacation with his children and grandchildren over the past week. He will be returning home to South Bend tomorrow evening (23 November).

- ◆ Following coffee & refreshments, Pr. Seyboldt will lead the Family Bible Class in a discussion of the today's Readings and other topics of interest.

Preparations have begun for this year's Christmas Pageant, which Donna Harrison will be directing with musical assistance from Rob Rhein. She is hoping that all of the children and youth (eighteen years and younger) will be willing and able to participate at least in the singing for the pageant. We ask that they be available for rehearsals during the usual catechesis time, in order to prepare. For more information and details, please speak to Donna.

- ◆ Emmaus will be gathered for the Divine Service on the Eve of Thanksgiving (this Wednesday, the 25th of November), beginning at 6:00 p.m.

- ◆ Pastor Stuckwisch will be vested and available in the Emmaus sanctuary for Individual Confession and Absolution this Saturday (28 November) from 5:00 until 7:00 p.m. This means of grace and forgiveness, by the authority of Christ our Lord, is freely offered to be freely received in repentant faith. Those with questions concerning this practice are encouraged to review the Small Catechism, and are welcome to visit with Pastor about it.

- ◆ The Altar flowers this morning have been provided by Sharon Makowski to the glory of God, in loving memory of her sister Linda.

- ◆ IN THE LORD'S SERVICE THIS LORD'S DAY:
(ELDERS) Eldon Knepp & Robert Rhein; (USHERS) Martin Horner & Nicholai Stuckwisch; (ACOLYTE) Frederick Stuckwisch; (ORGANIST) Dcs. Sandra Rhein; (GREETERS) Robert & Herta Johnston.

- ◆ Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Pastor Home Phone: (574) 233 – 0574

From the Lutheran Confessions

ON GOD'S ETERNAL FOREKNOWLEDGE AND ELECTION

“No public dissension has developed among the theologians of the Augsburg Confession concerning this article. But since it is such a comforting article when it is correctly treated, we have included an explanation of it in this document, lest at some future date offensive dissension concerning it might be introduced into the church.”

Affirmative—the Pure and True Doctrine concerning this Article

“1. To start with, the distinction between the foreknowledge and the eternal election of God is to be diligently noted.

“2. God’s foreknowledge is nothing else than that God knows all things before they happen, as it is written, ‘There is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days’ (Daniel 2:28).

“3. This foreknowledge extends alike over good people and evil people. But it is not a cause of evil or of sin which compels anyone to do something wrong; the original source of this is the devil and man’s wicked and perverse will. Neither is it the cause of man’s perdition; for this man himself is responsible. God’s foreknowledge merely controls the evil and imposes a limit on its duration, so that in spite of its wickedness it must minister to the salvation of His elect.

“4. Predestination or the eternal election of God, however, is concerned only with the pious children of God in whom He is well pleased. It is a cause of their salvation, for He alone brings it about and ordains everything that belongs to it. Our salvation is so firmly established upon it that the ‘gates of Hades cannot prevail against’ it (John 10:28; Matt. 16:18).

“5. We are not to investigate this predestination in the secret counsel of God, but it is to be looked for in His Word, where He has revealed it.

“6. The Word of God, however, leads us to Christ, who is ‘The Book of Life’ in which all who are to be eternally saved are inscribed and elected, as it is written, ‘He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world’ (Eph. 1:4).

“7. This Christ calls all sinners to Himself and promises them refreshment. He earnestly desires that all men should come to Him and let themselves be helped. To these He offers Himself in His Word, and it is His will that they hear the Word and do not stop their ears or despise it. In addition He promises the power and operation of the Holy Spirit and divine assistance for steadfastness and eternal life.

“8. Therefore we should not judge this election of ours to eternal life on the basis either of reason or of God’s law. This would either lead us into a reckless, dissolute, Epicurean life, or drive men to despair and waken dangerous thoughts in their hearts. As long as men follow their reason, they can hardly escape such reflections as this: ‘If God has elected me to salvation I cannot be damned, do as I will.’ Or, ‘If I am not elected to eternal life, whatever good I do is of no avail; everything is in vain in that case.’

“9. We must learn about Christ from the holy Gospel alone, which clearly testifies that ‘God has consigned all men to disobedience, that He may have mercy upon all’ (Rom. 11:32), and that He does not want anyone to perish (Ezek. 33:11; 18:23), but that everyone should repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (I Tim. 2:6; I John 2:2).

“10. The doctrine of God’s eternal election is profitable and comforting to the person who concerns himself with the revealed will of God and observes the order which St. Paul follows in the Epistle to the Romans. He there directs men first to repent, to acknowledge their sins, to believe in Christ, and to obey God, and only then does he speak of the mystery of God’s eternal election.

*“11. The passage, ‘Many are called, but few are chosen’ (Matt. 20:16), does **not** mean that God does not desire to save everyone. The cause of condemnation is that men either do not hear the Word of God at all but willfully despise it, harden their ears and their hearts, and thus bar the ordinary way for the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot work in them; or, if they do hear the Word, they cast it to the wind and pay no attention to it. The fault does not lie in God or His election, but in their own wickedness. (2 Pet. 2:2ff; Luke 11:49, 52; Heb. 12:25)*

“12. The Christian is to concern himself with the doctrine of the eternal election of God only in so far as it is revealed in the Word of God, which shows us Christ as the ‘Book of Life.’ Through the proclamation of the holy Gospel, Christ opens and reveals this Book for us. . . .”

(From The Formula of Concord [Epitome], 1577)

Walking with Our Savior this Week

TODAY Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.
 Coffee & Refreshment Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
 Bible Class / Pageant Rehearsal 10:45 a.m.

MONDAY *Pastor Stuckwisch returning to South Bend*

WEDNESDAY **Divine Service of Communion** **6:00 p.m.**

THURSDAY NATIONAL THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

SATURDAY Individual Confession & Absolution 5:00—7:00

NEXT SUNDAY Divine Service of Communion 9:00 a.m.
 Coffee & Refreshment Downstairs 10:30 a.m.
 Bible Class / Pageant Rehearsal 10:45 a.m.

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

*The Appointed Readings for next Sunday, the First Sunday in Advent:
Jeremiah 33:14–16; 1 Thessalonians 3:9–13; and St. Luke 19:28–40*

*Those who would like to subscribe to the Lutheran Witness —
at a cost of \$18 for the coming year — please speak to Betty
Shankle between now and the end of this month. Thank you!*