



St. Paul's Monthly Messenger

January, 2024

Pastor's Notes:

The Forgotten Parts of the Small Catechism – Table of Duties – Of Citizens

This month we continue to look at the “forgotten” parts of the Small Catechism by examining the Table of Duties. The Table of Duties begins with this title – “certain passages of scripture for various holy orders and positions, admonishing them about their duties and responsibilities.” Luther defined a holy order as any godly calling in which a faithful Christian did good works to serve God and neighbor. These are listed in the Table of Duties as bishops, pastors, and preachers; hearers; civil government; subjects; husbands; wives; parents; children; servants, hired men, and employees; employers; the young; widows; and all Christians in general. Most of us fall into several of these categories.

This month, we examine the second part of the civil estate, called “of citizens” in newer translations and “of subjects” in older ones. Either way, this means those who are not in civil government, but those who are ruled by it. In the Large Catechism, Luther relates the office of government to the fourth commandment, that those who are in authority are “fathers” in a wide sense over those they rule. Therefore, those who are subjects honor and please God by honoring their government authorities in the way they honor parents. Through civil government, just as through parents, God gives us “food, house, and home, protection and security” (LC I.150). We honor them and God uses them to provide for us.

Luther begins the table of duties on citizens with a quote from the gospels: *Therefore render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's* (Matthew 22:21). Jesus replies this to the Pharisees when they are attempting to trick Him, asking if one should pay taxes to Caesar (civil government) or not. Here from Jesus we get the basic principle that can guide how we live as citizens – the government deserves honor as far as it goes, but it does not go everywhere. Jesus is not saying Caesar has jurisdiction over everything – such as our own souls, or how we worship – but he does have jurisdiction over things like taxes and money where he should generally be obeyed.

Luther follows with a quote from St. Paul to the Romans that reflects Jesus' words:

Therefore one must be in subjection, not only to avoid God's wrath but also for the sake of conscience. For because of this you also pay taxes, for the authorities are ministers of God, attending to this very thing. Pay to all what is owed to them: taxes to whom taxes are owed, revenue to whom revenue is owed, respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed (Romans 13:5-7).

Since, as we know from last month, rulers have the divinely-given office to reward good and punish evil, being Christians, we should follow what they say because we want to do good and avoid evil! So unless this is being monstrously violated (there are exceptions I don't have space to cover here), we should give honor and tribute to those who God has put in place to rule over us.

But what if the rulers have significant faults, or we don't like them or what they are doing? The next verse from 1 Timothy gives a good answer:

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior. (1 Timothy 2:1-3)

As Christian citizens, it is our duty to pray for our rulers regularly so that we may live peaceful and godly lives. We are to pray continually that they may rule by the law of God, punish the evil, reward the good, and help us to worship freely and peacefully.

(cont. from pg 1)

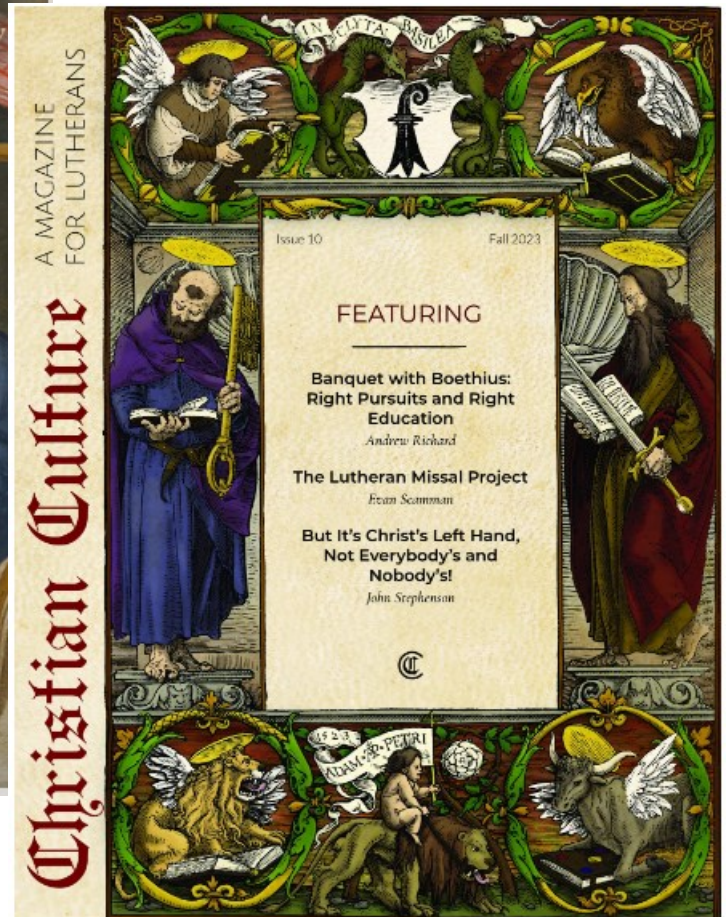
It is God who has put them into office, and God who can change their hearts or remove them, if need be. He has done it before and will do it again until Jesus returns.

We look forward to that final day when we will have one, perfect ruler, Jesus Christ who every eye will see and tongue will confess. But for now, we trust that Christ is ruling by faith. This is why St. Paul also says, *“Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work”* (Titus 3:1), and St. Peter says *“Be subject for the Lord’s sake to every human institution, whether it be to the emperor as supreme, or to governors as sent by him to punish those who do evil and to praise those who do good”* (1 Peter 2:13-14). Even if we don’t necessarily like our rulers or agree with what they are doing, in most cases to obey them is a “good work,” not towards them, but to God, who has set them in place. We are subject to them not because of who they are, but “for the Lord’s sake,” obeying those in authority because the True Authority has put them there.

As Luther demonstrates, we obey rulers as far as God has given them to rule, not for their own sake, but because our Lord has put them there in His good and perfect will. As Luther says, if the monks knew how pleasing it was to do a simple thing like obey authorities compared to all their made-up spirituality, they would be running to do so! May we as Christian citizens display godliness in this way.



Mission Offering for January: Coalition Life: Coalition Life is now a rapidly growing 501(c)(3) non-profit with a mission of Ending Abortion peacefully and prayerfully. Directed by Brian Westbrook, Coalition Life counselors and prayer volunteers have helped save hundreds of children from abortion since 2009 and have impacted thousands of men and women. Beginning in 2011, the Coalition Life staff and volunteers began turning away mothers from certain abortions outside on the streets in front of the last active abortion facility in Missouri. Coalition Life's efforts then expanded to Southern and Cook County, Illinois. www.coalitionlife.com



Magazines to Take and Read: The Christmas issue of *Gottesdienst: The Journal of Lutheran Liturgy* has arrived with various interesting articles on liturgy and the Bible, sermons, and Bible study. We are also now receiving copies of *Christian Culture: A Magazine for Lutherans*, which is printed by Luther Classical College, a new LCMS college in Wyoming (cc.lutherclassical.org) - this has articles on history, the arts, theology, and many other topics. Please pick one up and take home!

Food and Fellowship at

Lunch with Pastor

Thanks to everyone who came out on December 12th. Lunch with pastor is a monthly fellowship event held every second Monday where all are invited to come enjoy food and fellowship, as well as speak to pastor about whatever is on your mind in a casual setting. Our next lunch is scheduled at 11 am, January 9th at George's restaurant.



NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE WEEKLY MESSENGER

Lunch with Pastor: Lunch with Pastor will meet at George's this month on Monday, January 9th at 11 a.m. *Please let Pastor know if you plan to come by December 8th as the restaurant needs to know the size of the party.*

Manna: Order forms are available on Sunday, January 8th, orders with payment are due on January 15th and orders can be picked up on January 22nd.

Nursery help needed: We are in need of volunteers to be on a rotation for the nursery during Sunday School/Bible Class hour. While we need someone every Sunday, this does not need to be a full year commitment. This will help parents with small children teach Sunday School or attend Adult bible Class. If you are willing to join the rotation or help out certain weeks, contact Pastor or Karin Antonetti.

Going to be out of town? Did you know you can give online to St. Paul's through our website? If you're out of town or forget your checkbook or envelopes you can still give your offerings online! You can even set up regular payments through your bank if you would like. Go to www.stpaulslockport.org and go to the "Give" page. If you have any questions, feel free to ask Pastor or our Financial Secretary, Laura Wetherbee.



Christmas Decoration

Thanks to the Hannah Guild, Trustees, and all the helpers, young and old, who came out to decorate the church for Christmas on December 9!

Thanks especially to Jerry Hinkelman for his work on refurbishing our outdoor nativity

We will be taking down Christmas decorations after our Epiphany service on Sunday, January 7, and would appreciate any help. Many hands make light work!

No, the three magi did not travel by truck in the Bible, but they did for our nativity! >>>>>>>>



Photos from the Youth Christmas Pageant on December 20

Directed by Rachel Saxon



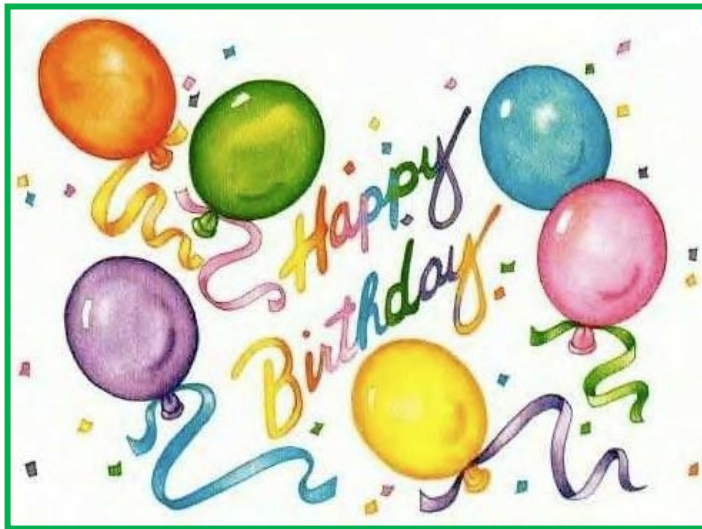


January, 2024

at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Lockport

815.838.1832
www.stpaulslockport.org
spchhoff@gmail.com

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 New Year's Day	2	3	4	5 Epiphany	6 Epiphany Party
	OFFICE CLOSED	8 am Morning Prayer 7 pm Elders Meeting	8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Pvt. Confession & Absolution	6 pm Trustee meeting	8 am Morning Prayer	
7 Epiphany (Obsv.) 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult Bible Class/Sunday School	8	9 8 am Morning Prayer 11 am Lunch with Pastor 7 pm Church Council	10 8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Pvt. Confession & Absolution 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:30 pm Jr. Confirmation	11 9 am Circuit meeting at Our Savior-Joliet	12 8 am Morning Prayer	13
14 Baptism of our Lord (Obsvd.) 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult Bible Class/Sunday School	15	16	17 5:00 pm Choir Practice	18	19	20 9 am Women's Group
		Pastor at Symposia in Fort Wayne				
21 Transfiguration 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult Bible Class/Sunday School	22	23 8 am Morning Prayer	24 11 am NICL 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:30 pm Jr. Confirmation	25 Pastor - Retreat	26 8 am Morning Prayer	27
28 Septuagesima 9 am Divine Worship 10:15 am Fellowship 10:40 am Adult Bible Class/Sunday School 6 pm Book of Concord	29	30 8 am Morning Prayer	31 8 am Morning Prayer 8:30 am Conf./Absolution 5:00 pm Choir Practice 6:30 pm Jr. Confirmation			



Happy Baptismal Birthday

Michael Polinski	January 1
Patricia Schoenbeck	January 1
Jason Karaus	January 2
Henry Antonetti	January 3
Megan Panka	January 8
Rebecca Chaney	January 13
Timothy Fox	January 13
Hunter Rahn	January 18
Jack Kantelberg	January 31

Paul Thomas	January 1
Robert Richmond, Jr.	January 2
Jeanette Luzbetak	January 4
Isaac Zavala	January 6
Jack Kantelberg	January 7
Gregory Miller	January 8
Allan Luzbetak	January 10
Judy Wiedmeyer	January 10
Ryan Bellas	January 12
Mark Wolfrum	January 12
Charlyne Milligan	January 13
Ben Rohder	January 13
Courtney Richmond	January 16
Maura Fox	January 24
Jerry Staley	January 26
Bill Martin	January 27
Lisa Polinski	January 27
Ron Barmann	January 29
Harold Sager	January 31
Lauren Wojciechowski	January 31



Christopher & Lisa Misiurewicz	January 1, 2001
Glenn & Barbara Ferrentino	January 16, 1971
Carl & Sandy Michaelson	January 24, 1969

We will be printing out the birthdays, anniversaries and baptismal birthdays every month in the newsletter. If we have missed anyone or if any are in error, please let the church office know. Thanks.



St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church

1500 S. Briggs Street, Lockport, Illinois

Office phone: 815-838-1832 - Email: spchoff@gmail.com

Pastor's phone: 847-971-0848

Email: pastor.antonetti@gmail.com

Website: www.stpaulslockport.org