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BREAKING  
NEWS!



Missing!

# The Evangelical Protestant The Magazine of the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church

FALL 2012

FIRST ISSUE 1917

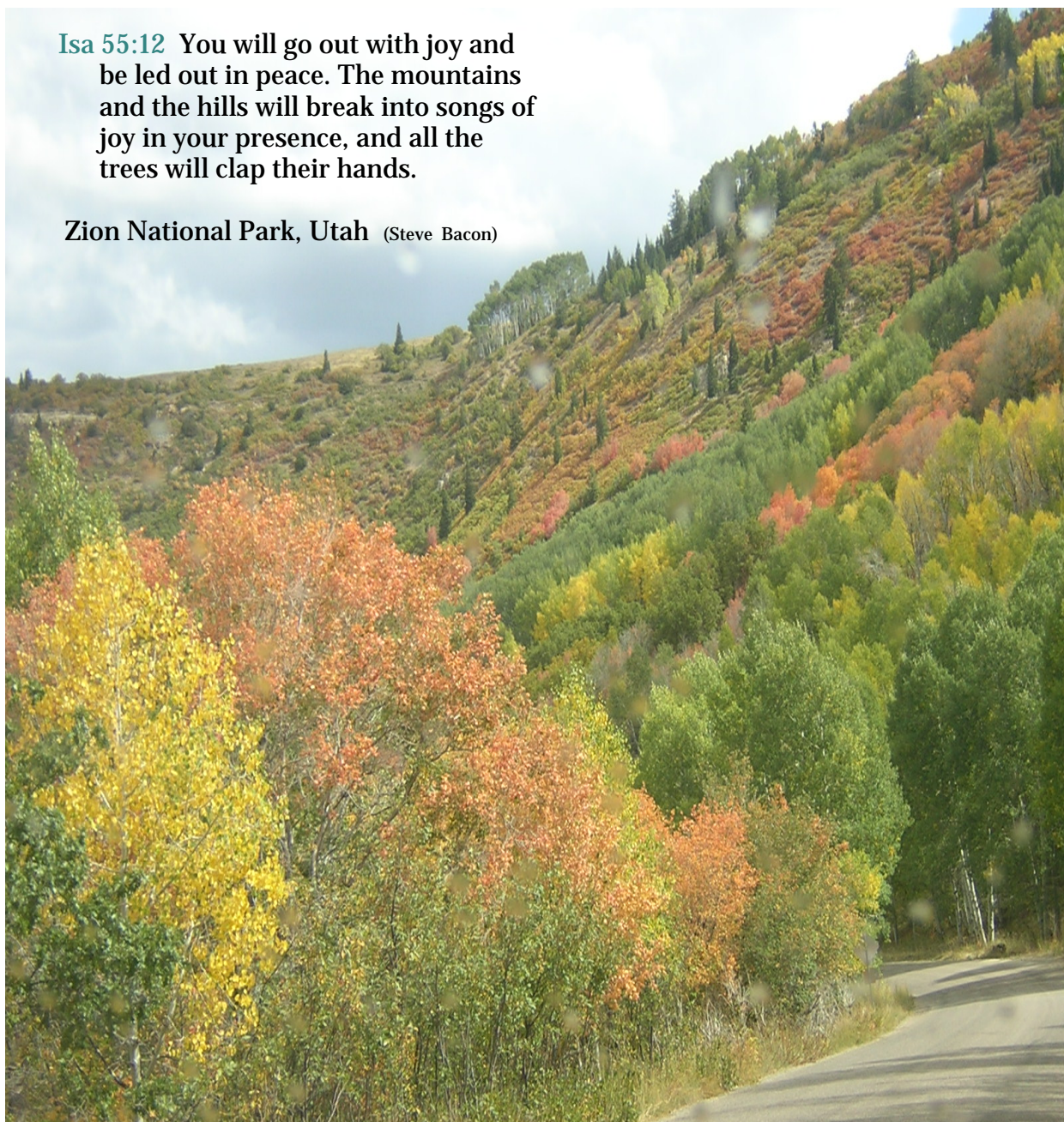
## The Trees Will Clap Their Hands!

**Isa 55:12** You will go out with joy and be led out in peace. The mountains and the hills will break into songs of joy in your presence, and all the trees will clap their hands.

Zion National Park, Utah (Steve Bacon)

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Lutheran Evangelical  
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*GCEPC "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2: 8*

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Editor Rev. Steve Bacon

# We Believe

**1. The Holy Scriptures**, in the original tongues, is the inspired and inerrant word of God. (Matthew 4:4, 2 Timothy 3:16,17)

**2. There is one God**, eternal and self-existent, Creator and Ruler of the universe, and manifested through the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (John 1:18, Matthew 3:16-17) We are Trinitarian.

**3. Jesus Christ** is truly divine and truly human having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. (Matt.1: 18)

**4. Jesus Christ** died on the cross and shed His blood as a Sacrifice

for our sins; He arose bodily from the dead, ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High. (1 John 2:2)

**5. Humankind** was created in the image of God, but fell into sin causing separation from God. (Gen. 3:1-24)

**6. Salvation** has been provided through Jesus Christ for all; and those who repent and believe on Him are born again of the Holy Spirit, receive the gift of eternal life and become the children of God. (John 1:10)

**7. Water baptism** identifies us with the death and burial of Christ and that we should arise to

walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19-20)

**8. We believe in the ministry of the Holy Spirit** to glorify Christ, to convict of sin, to enable the believer to live a godly life, and to empower the Church to carry the gospel into all the world. (Matthew 12:31, Acts 1:8.)

**9. In the personal and visible return of Jesus Christ** for His Church. (Matthew 24:30, Rev 1:7)

**10. In the bodily resurrection** of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved and everlasting separation from God of all those who reject Jesus Christ. (John 1:10-13, Rev 20:11-15)

## The Apostle's Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended into hell.

On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

AMEN.

# Bishop's Page



Hello and blessings to all,

We are again happy to bring the Evangelical Protestant quarterly magazine to you.

The seasons come and go and now fall is upon us. In this issue is information for our upcoming 40 Days of Prayer for the Elections beginning September 28<sup>th</sup> and also our International Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem October 7th. Information can be found in these articles for resources to use with your churches and ministries.

God is good to us and is again providing for gathering and fellowship through the efforts of our Wisconsin Synod. The Wisconsin Region will be hosting a Fall Retreat beginning October 12<sup>th</sup>. I am looking forward to this time of refreshing. Be sure to get your registration and reservations made. It will no doubt be wonderful and will be a blessing as all of our gatherings always are. All EPC/LEPC ministers and spouses are welcome to attend.

As we transition now from summer to fall I am reminded of how God aids us in our transitions. Sometimes it is from one job to another, one city to another, one school to another.



see where it might be able to be improved. More than anything I challenge you child of

God to learn to hear His voice.

All relationships are built on communication in one form or the other. Don't wait until you need direction, comfort, or understanding and find yourself struggling to try to hear His voice and discern His will. Develop your relationship with Holy Spirit in the times of peace.

*My greatest desire for all of our ministers is that they would have a close walk with Our Lord, learning His ways, hearing His voice, knowing Him.*



Sometime it is from one spiritual place to another in our walk with Him.

Sometimes the transitions have to do with relationships. Those might include marriage, the birth of a child, children leaving the nest, children returning to the nest, the death of a loved one.

In all of these challenges whether they are happy or sad Jesus through the Holy Spirit desires to walk with us every step of the way. All we have to do is turn to Him. Sometimes what we need to do is to run to Him. Sometimes He is just there and we experience His presence always because we have made relationship with Him a priority in our lives.

I challenge you to do inventory of your walk with the Lord and

Jeremiah 12:5 "If you have raced with men on foot and they have worn you out, how can you compete with horses? If you stumble in safe country, how will you manage in the thickets by the Jordan?"

God's blessings and peace to you in all of your transitions in whatever way they present themselves. May you be strong to run with the horses and find the thicket only a nuisance that is easily overcome.

Blessings,

*Bishop Nancy Drew*

**Wisconsin Region Retreat  
October 12 – 14, 2012  
St Anthony Retreat Center  
Marathon, Wisconsin**

**Questions and Queries:** Direct to: Bishop Pat Pierce, Retreat Coordinator

**Reservations and Registration:** Direct to: Bishop Bill Dorn



Mark your calendars and plan to join us if you can make it to our Wisconsin Region Retreat. We are excited about our Retreat which will be held at St Anthony Retreat Center in beautiful northern Wisconsin. All EPC/LEPC ministers and their spouses are invited to attend this time of fellowship, spiritual renewal, planning, worship, discussion, breaking bread together and more! More information will be coming out in the next couple of weeks. Thank you Bishop Pat and Bishop Bill for your help in bringing this to reality! God Bless the EPC/LEPC and our powerful Spirit filled ministries!!!

IHS,  
Bishop Dennis Overlien  
Wisconsin Region and surrounding area.

## A Modern Macedonian Call: Reach Out and Love the Unloved

by Bishop Dr. David Church



### Acts 16:9-10

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. (10) And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

We have all heard stories of *them*. ***They live in the run down areas of large cities. Places with names like Skid Row, the Mission District, Harlem, and the Inner City. We don't want them around us or our children. They're dirty and smell, not caring about their appearance. They can't be trusted, they're lazy and don't want to work for a living like we do, a bunch of thieves, thugs, and prostitutes. They don't want to go to school and learn anything like we did. They'd rather sit around getting high or drunk, or sell drugs to others of their kind. They don't care about themselves, so why should we? A bunch of godless drug addicts. We don't want them in our neighborhoods or churches!! They should all be taken off the streets and locked up!! They are in jail so often the jailors ought just to keep them. Keep the rest of us safe, untouched by the ugly reality of rampant sin in the world.***

This is exactly what Jesus heard from the self-righteous Pharisees and scribes of His day.

We hear the story of the

Pharisee praising himself before the Lord in the temple, boasting to God about the number of times he fasts during the week, how much he tithed, and thanking God that he was not created like ***other men, or as a tax collector or as a woman***. He was well off in his own mind before God, and he considered God lucky to have him! But look closely at who left justified!!

Well, I have both bad news and good news for you! The **bad news** first: addicts and alcoholics are not just living in the areas described above. They are our neighbors and friends, people who are hurting within their souls, having no direction, and on the path to a Christless eternity.

The **good news** is: addicts and alcoholics are not just living in the areas described above. They are our neighbors and friends, people who are hurting within their souls, having no direction, and on the path to a Christless eternity.

We have a mission field ripe for harvest right outside our front doors! There are several generations of people for whom Christ died but live in despair and emptiness within a short walk for most of us. They grew up in the sixties and the following decades when the status quo was questioned, as well as government

and "organized religion." Toleration of sinful acts and lifestyles because pluralistic and relativistic philosophies prevailed in academia and the marketplace, and true morality declined. They are all searching for something or someone to fill that emptiness in their souls and to bring relief to the pain- physical, mental, or spiritual- that all of us at one time endured ourselves until called out of darkness by Jesus Christ to enter a life of filled with awe, wonder, and thankfulness. Those who are lost are the ones Jesus specifically came for, to seek and to bring into the fold. But as a rule, most Christians prefer denial of the realities fueling addiction and poverty, and bury their heads in the sand while pretending there is nothing that they can do about the scourge of addiction sweeping all cities, large and small. They would rather keep to their safe country clubs that call themselves churches and shut out the ugly world. They self-righteously consider themselves morally superior to the down and out addict because they go to church and tithe to their churches programs. They work hard to earn money to provide their families with the necessities of life, such as ski boats, vacations in Europe, ATVs to ride, and the two Mercedes Benz automobiles in the driveway that are the envy of their neighbors. As an afterthought, they may slip an extra five dollar bill into

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

the Deacon's Fund for the poor. They may even give a panhandler a dollar, but only to get away from him. There is nothing wrong with possessions, but do they possess these things or do these things possess them? They enjoy fellowship with one another but wouldn't want to be caught dead eating with *sinner*s. They either have not experienced true grace within themselves, or they have become so self absorbed by their lives and many material blessings that they no longer hear the plight of others. But God does hear and takes note of our attitudes towards those less fortunate than ourselves. He gazes into our heart to ascertain our motives, although we may look very spiritual on the outside. We are required by Christ to interact and to love them. Biblically we should be helping them until they are self-sufficient, not just give them a handout. We need to wake up to the fact that people all around us are hurting and are on the way to Hell.

Unfortunately, the poor Carpenter with soiled hands which would later be dripping blood would also be unwelcome in these churches. In the Revelation of Jesus Christ we see Him knocking on the door of the Church at Laodicea to gain entrance and no one answers or will let Him in. If *we* are willing to let Him into His Church He can and will do miraculous things in our sight. What does Jesus tell them to do?

“I know your works: you are neither cold nor hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. For you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing, not realizing that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. **I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you may be rich, and white garments so that you may clothe yourself and the shame of your nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, so that you may see.** Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and repent.

(Revelation 3:15-19 ESV)

Jesus has the same call to the Laodicean Church as He has given throughout the ages. Jesus says “Repent.” As a corporate Body and as individuals we are called to repent and to lead others to repentance also. He wants us to see the poor and addict through His eyes and to treat them as we would treat Him. Through Christ there is no one beyond His reach and transforming power. He can and will take the violent and addicted offender and transform him into His servant to reach others that are hurting. Jesus Christ can take a corrupt man who was taught deadly martial arts, combat skills and weapons and give him a heart for the lost. He will heal a man whose mind was bent by continuous drug abuse to anesthetize his pain and anger over loss, and do something miraculous in and with his life. Jesus will turn him by His grace into a man caring for those marginalized and exploited by society, preaching the Gospel to others like himself, the Gospel that transforms a hopelessly lost sinner, the Gospel that brings those wandering in spiritual darkness into the light. ***I know first hand because I am that man.***

Bishop Dr. David Church



# Forgiveness and Reconciliation – Part 1

By Bishop Jessica Johnston, Spirit Soul and Body Ministries

Many Christians today hold the belief that when you forgive someone for the wrong they did, you are required to reconcile the relationship regardless of the offense or degree of offense. It is important for the body of Christ to understand the truth and difference between forgiveness and reconciliation as we are called to be ministers of reconciliation. (II Corinthians 5:18)

In many cases forgiveness is a pathway to reconciliation. Extending forgiveness often draws people closer to God and at times to deeper relationship with one another. In our relationships, “love covers a multitude of sins” (i.e. offenses)” (I Peter 4:8) and in Matthew 6:14-15 Jesus warns us that God will not forgive our sins if we do not forgive those who sin against us. We are told “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:18)



Yet there are times when we are faced with deep betrayal, abuse and/or repeated offense with an offender who does not want to admit their wrong, truly repent and acknowledge the damage done. In these cases it is vital to understand what reconciliation is and what is required to achieve it, not only for ourselves but in order to give Godly counsel to those we serve.

The word "reconciliation" refers to the process of changing something thoroughly and adjusting it to something else that is a standard. In the Bible, reconciliation is the word used to refer to the process by which God changes us to reflect His perfect character. In our own relationship with God reconciliation is not possible unless we repent, come into agreement with Him regarding our sin and humble ourselves to His work through the Holy Spirit. It is the same in our relationships with others. Reconciliation takes two. It is a process of restoring trust and is conditional. It requires repentance. “If your brother sins against you, rebuke him and if he repents, forgive him. If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, I repent, forgive him.” Luke 17:3-4

Therefore, the first step for the offended is to determine if the offender is genuinely repentant especially when it involves repeated offenses or deep betrayals of trust. How do we do this? “By their fruit you will recognize them” (Matthew 7:16a). We should see clear changes in attitude and behavior not just superficial appearance of repentance.



Here are seven signs of genuine repentance (From the blog of Steve Cornell 7/28/2007):

1. Accepts full responsibility for his or her actions. (Instead of: “Since you think I’ve done something wrong...” or “If I have done anything to offend you...”).
2. Welcomes accountability from others.
3. Does not continue in the hurtful behavior or anything associated with it.
4. Does not have a defensive attitude about his or her being in the wrong.
5. Does not have a light attitude toward his or her hurtful behavior.
6. Does not resent doubts about his or her sincerity – nor the need to demonstrate sincerity — especially in cases involving repeated offenses.
7. Makes restitution where necessary.

If true signs of repentance exist then with wisdom and counsel the process of reconciliation may proceed but remains conditional on the continued attitude and behavior of the offender.

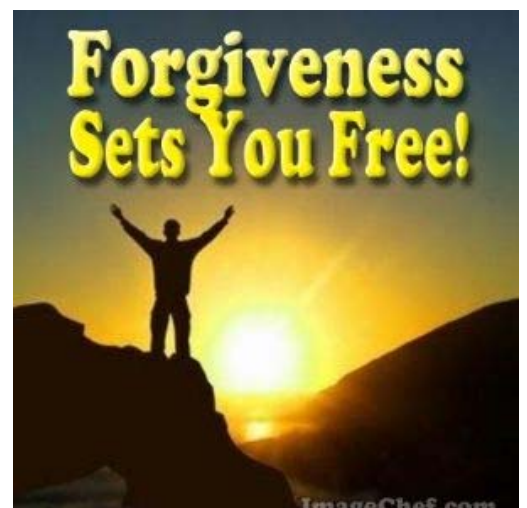
If those signs do not exist then forgiveness can be extended but true reconciliation may not be possible because of the denial of the offender and the inability to build trust in the relationship.

Proverbs 17:3 says that “there is safety in the multitude of counselors.” So anyone dealing with betrayal and hurt and determining whether to reconcile a relationship should seek Godly counsel.

In part two we will talk further about the pathway to reconciliation.



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# Luther, the Jewish People, and Lutherans Today



'The one who is righteous will live by faith.' For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and wickedness of those who by their wickedness suppress the truth." (Romans 1:16-18)

One could argue that once Luther uncovered this promise, he spent the rest of his life discerning what this promise means. His leadership and reforms were not just a church program or good ideas acted upon, but in his view an absolute necessity to proclaim the promises of God. What made him so popular and opened the possibility of his protest to become a reform movement was his tenacity and zeal. What in his mind was an uncompromising proclamation of the truth, was also an unruly stubbornness that alienated those who disagreed with him.

What people admired in Luther in the 16th Century and still admire in him now was his ferocity in standing up for what he believed in. "Here I stand!" is a great legacy. Couldn't we all use a little more boldness like that? But there is a dark side to that kind of boldness. The troubling consequences of Luther's single-mindedness continue to haunt all who still look to him for guidance.

Because Luther believed so boldly that Christ died for all of sinful humanity, and how obvious that truth became to him in his reading of scripture, he could not understand why people could not believe it. It became a personal affront to him, and in his view, an affront to the church and society. In this regard Luther became hostile toward the Jewish people, writing horrible things in a tract titled, "On the Jews and Their Lies (1543)." Centuries later, the Nazi regime in Germany would use Luther's popularity along with this tract to attempt to legitimize persecution, violence, and mass murder of the Holocaust.

It takes courage to admit wrongdoing, humility to ask for forgiveness, and faithfulness to move forward. Lutherans since the end of the Second World War have denounced Luther's views against the Jewish people. Remembering the past while renewing relationships continues into the future.

"Contemporary Lutheranism has distanced itself from Luther's unfortunate legacy in many ways. Memorials to the Holocaust are found throughout Germany, signaling a more positive course for Jewish-Lutheran relations. The Lutheran World Federation, speaking for the global communion, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have spoken in words that now conclude a multimedia presentation on anti-Semitism and the Holocaust at the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C. These words clearly reject Luther's position, deplore any use of Luther's words to support anti-Semitism, express repentance, and commit Lutherans to positive relationships with the Jewish community. Though some Lutherans still affirm evangelism efforts directed specifically at the Jews, one discerns increasing rapprochement among Jews and Lutherans." [1]

For Lutherans today, understanding Luther as both bold in faith, yet blinded by his own arrogance is a principle that stands both as encouragement and warning. Luther contributed much to church and society as well as leaving this sinful stain upon it. For we who are justified by faith apart from the works of the law are to keep in our heart, souls and mind not only God's loving grace and mercy, but also the consequences of our actions what we confess, "we have done and left undone." With the hope in the Lord, the boldness of faith, and the realization of our human sinful brokenness, Lutherans today move forward with our Jewish brothers and sisters in hope of reconciliation and the building of a just and peaceful society.

## **Responses from various Lutheran Church Bodies**

### **Lutheran World Federation**

"We Christians must purge ourselves of any hatred of the Jews and any sort of teaching of contempt for Judaism." (Consultation, 1982)

### **Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)**

#### **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**

"In the spirit of that truth-telling, we who bear his name and heritage must with pain acknowledge also Luther's anti-Judaic diatribes and the violent recommendations of his later writings against the Jews. As did many of Luther's own companions in the sixteenth century, we reject this violent invective, and yet more do we express our deep and abiding sorrow over its tragic effects on subsequent generations. In concert with the Lutheran World Federation, we particularly deplore the appropriation of Luther's words by modern anti-Semites for the teaching of hatred toward Judaism or toward the Jewish people in our day.

Grieving the complicity of our own tradition within this history of hatred, moreover, we express our urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people. We recognize in anti-Semitism a contradiction and an affront to the Gospel, a violation of our hope and calling, and we pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry, both within our own circles and in the society around us. Finally, we pray for the continued blessing of the Blessed One upon the increasing cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community." ("Declaration of ELCA to the Jewish Community," 1994. Online Available here.)

#### **Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church (LEPC)**

#### **General Conference of Evangelical Protestant Churches (GCEPC)**

"The Jewish people are God's chosen people. Believers should bless them as scripture says that God will bless those who bless Israel and curse those who curse Israel. The LEPC/EPC/ GCEPC recant and renounce the works and words of Martin Luther concerning the Jewish people. Prayer is offered for the healing of the Jewish people, their peace and their prosperity. Prayer is offered for the peace of Jerusalem. With deep sorrow and regret repentance is offered to the Jewish People for the harm that Martin Luther caused and any contribution to their harm. Forgiveness is requested of the Jewish People for these actions. The Gospel is to the Jew first and then the Gentile. Gentiles (believers in Christ other than Jews) have been grafted into the vine. In Christ there is neither Jew nor Gentile but the Lord's desire is that there be one new man from the two for Christ broke down the wall of separation with His own body (Ephesians 2:14- 15). The LEPC/EPC/ GCEPC blesses Israel and the Jewish people. Prayers are offered for the Middle East and for the salvation and peace of the Arab World." (LEPC/GCEPC, "Antisemitism." Online Available here)

### **Evangelisch-Lutherische Kirche in Bayern (Bavaria)**

"It is imperative for the Lutheran Church, which knows itself to be indebted to the work and tradition of Martin Luther, to take seriously also his anti-Jewish utterances, to acknowledge their theological function, and to reflect on their consequences. It has to distance itself from every [expression of] anti-Judaism in Lutheran theology." (ELKB, Freiburger Rundbrief, 6:3 (1999), 191-197.)

### **Evangelische Kirche (Austria)**

"We realize with shame that our churches showed themselves inured by the fate of the Jews and countless other victims of persecution. This is all the more incomprehensible because Protestant Christians in their own history, especially in the Counter-Reformation, were themselves discriminated against and persecuted. The churches did not protest against visible injustice; they were silent and looked away; they did not 'throw themselves into the spokes of the wheel' (Bonhoeffer).

Therefore, not only individual Christians but also our churches share in the guilt of the Holocaust/Shoah. We remember with grief all victims of persecution who were divested of their civil rights and their human dignity, abandoned to an unrelenting pursuit and murdered in concentration camps. The General Synod asks the Jewish congregations [Israelitische Kultusgemeinden] and the Jews in Austria to receive the following assurance:

- The Evangelical Churches know themselves obliged to always keep alive the memory of the Jewish people's history of suffering and of the Shoah.
- The Evangelical Churches know themselves obliged to check the teaching, sermon, instruction, liturgy and practice of the church for any antisemitism and to also, through its media, stand up against prejudices.

### **Notes:**

- 1 Gunther Gassmann, Duane Howard, and Mark W. Oldenburg. Historical Dictionary of Lutheranism. [Lanham: Scarecrow press, 2001], 162.
2. "Luther the Jewish People and Lutherans Today" [lutherans.com/guide/lutherans\\_and\\_jews.php](http://lutherans.com/guide/lutherans_and_jews.php)  
Recovered 06 Sept.2012 printed in entirety with gratitude non-profit.

# This Is the Day



What You have done will be praised from one generation to the next;

they will proclaim Your mighty acts. Psalm 145:4

Each year on the fourth Sunday in August the Norwegian Lutheran Church (Norsk Evangelical-Lutherske Kirke) in the Town of Waupun, Wisconsin holds a worship service in their original church building to commemorate their beginnings as a center of worship. All of the surrounding community is invited. Their historic church structure was built in 1855. The well maintained one room church has no plumbing or electricity and is heated by a wood burning stove. It is the only pioneer Norwegian Lutheran Church in the area. This historic building is located several miles from Waupun, Wisconsin just north of the Horicon Wildlife Refuge in the beautiful Wisconsin countryside. The

annual worship service is done in the Lutheran Tradition and is open to all churches in the Waupun area to include Dutch Reform, Lutheran (ELCA, Missouri and Wisconsin synods and the Lutheran Evangelical Protestant Church). Other churches invited were the United Congregational Church, Catholic, Baptist, Evangelical Free, and Pentecostal Church, and several non-denominational churches.

This year's annual Norwegian Lutheran Church service in their original building was held on August 26, 2012. For this year, 2012, ministers of the Lutheran EPC, Wisconsin Synod were invited as guest presenters to celebrate the worship service. Bishop Dr. William Dorn and Chaplain Reverend Deborah Mejchar presided.

In addition to the worship service, a reflection on the church's history and the Norwegian Immigrants who lived and worshiped there was presented by a local historian from the United Methodist Church in Oakfield, Wisconsin. Our own LEPC clergy officiated at the service with Rev. Deborah Mejchar (Chaplain at Fox Lake Correctional Institution) as guest preacher along with Bishop Bill Dorn (Chaplain at Dodge Correctional Institution) conducting the liturgy and Sacrament of Holy Communion. Music for hymns was provided by Mr. Carl Neuman, a concertina artist, from Immanuel Lutheran Church of Waupun. The service was followed by a coffee hour in the sanctuary with much good fellowship to had by all.



*(Continued on page 13)*

(Continued from page 12)

A special thank you to Rev. Deborah Mejchar and Bishop Bill Dorn of the LEPC who did a beautiful job of leading the worship service as we celebrated this historic event. We look forward to doing more of the same and continuing to minister in special ways as we serve our wonderful Lord and Savior.

*Bishop Dennis Overlien, Wisconsin Synod LEPC*

source: Oshgosh Public Library

<http://oshkoshpub.cdmhost.com/cdm/singleitem/collection/p15089coll2/id/451/rec/21>



# So, why pray for the 2012 Elections?

There are a number of compelling reasons:

- The Bible commands us to pray for those who are in leadership. This includes those who are vying to become leaders.
- Godly leaders can help slow the erosion of religious liberties in our land. This can provide an increased window of opportunity for the Church to pray and evangelize.
- According to Scripture, “Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people” (Prov. 14:34). The selection of leaders who understand and lead according to God’s righteous standards can bring great blessing to a nation.
- Scripture also says in Proverbs 11:14, “For lack of guidance a nation falls, but many advisors make victory sure.” The determination of who leads our nation will also determine who advises that leader and how we are guided.

## We Need to Pray Now

As you pray through this brief guide to the elections, there are several ways you can maximize its usage:

- Let others know about it. Distribute it widely to your friends and to your church.
- Pray with others about its content. Perhaps a weekly prayer meeting held in your home or your church could focus completely on what God desires to do in this upcoming election.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you beyond the content of the prayer guide. There will be many times in which this guide simply jump-starts your prayer time. The Holy Spirit will take this beginning point and lead you into deeper times of intercession for our nation.

## Seven Ways to Pray for America

1. **The Church** The Church is often relegated to the sidelines, considered irrelevant and out of touch. Though we sometimes deserve that critique, God has a completely different perspective on what His people are to be and how we are to function. In Ephesians 3:10, the Apostle Paul writes, “His [God’s] intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known....” Though seemingly powerless in the eyes of the world, the Church—through righteousness, prayer, and the power of the Holy Spirit—releases the wisdom of God into any and every culture. Pray today for the Church in America, that:
  - Our eyes will be opened to see the hope to which we are called (Eph.1:18).
  - We will experience in a fresh, new way the Presence of Christ in revival.
  - Believers will be given the faith to believe that their votes will make a difference.
  - A spirit of repentance and humility will be poured out upon the people of God.
2. **The Voters** The Great American Experiment in representative government for more than 200 years has depended upon voter involvement. From the very beginning of our nation there has been debate on who should be allowed the privilege of casting a vote to select our governmental leaders. The weight of history has increasingly opened the ballot box to more and more individuals. This requires an educated electorate who will examine the issues and the candidates and vote in a way that is best for the nation, not just their own well-being. Much prayer is needed for this critical process. Pray today for voters in the United States, that:

**That we might live peaceful quiet lives in godliness and holiness....**

**I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.” (1 Timothy 2:1, NIV)**

- Wisdom will be sought from God (James 1:5).
- Self-interest will be laid aside for the common good.
- Discernment between truth and falsehood will be clear.

### 3. The Candidates

In the early years of our nation, it was thought to be in bad taste to even be seen wanting an office, much less actually campaigning. Oh, how things have changed! Now candidates for public office, especially at higher levels, put themselves and their families through a rigorous process that brings every aspect of their lives into public view. It has become so intense that many good individuals have chosen not to endure the sort of public scrutiny that is an integral part of the campaigning process today. Praying for candidates does not mean praying just for those you agree with or support. All are leaders and potential leaders in our nation—and as such, all need our prayers. Pray today for candidates for office in the United States, that:

- They will take brave stands for righteousness, even when it may not be well received.
- Their families will be protected from harm and unnecessary scrutiny.
- They will surround themselves with godly advisors.
- They will focus on the issues we face as a nation and not on personal attacks on other candidates.

### 4. The Media

In our day of 24-hour news coverage, the media have taken on a huge role in our election process. Handling media correctly sometimes seems to take precedence in a campaign over actually dealing with issues. The media themselves often forget their role of informing and reporting and have become endorsers and supporters, even while they try to deny that role. Increased prayer for the media is an essential way for Christians to impact an election. Pray today for the media in America, that:

- Truth in reporting and election coverage will become a high value.
- Media bias will disappear.
- Christianity will receive fair coverage in all reports.
- Hope will become a part of the message of the media.

**It is imperative that we pray faithfully for the 2012 elections, yet our hope and trust is not in the results of elections!**

### 5. The Impact on the Nations

In our rapidly shrinking world, what happens in one country has an effect on others. This is especially true for the United States. The individuals who hold the presidency and Senate and Congressional seats will make decisions that impact the rest of the world. Whether those decisions help or harm the people of the world is largely determined by the choices that Americans make at the polls. We need to pray that our choices will serve to bless the world. Pray today for the election and its impact on the world, that:

- Voters will consider the foreign policies of candidates and how they fit with biblical principles.
- The activities of other nations will not have an undue influence on our elections.
- The result of U.S. elections will serve to spread the gospel around the globe.
- The U.S. will stand firm in its commitment to Israel's right to exist as a nation.



## 6. Spiritual Warfare Surrounding the Elections

Nothing is achieved in the Kingdom of God without warfare. That includes the election of righteous individuals to the leadership of one of the key nations on the planet. As we pray, we must expect the enemy to attack in many ways. There will be attacks on candidates and their families, on the media, the Church, and perhaps the nation itself. Some will be clearly spiritual, while other attacks may have physical manifestations. Our call is to have great discernment as we pray and stand in the strength of Christ's victory. Pray today around the spiritual warfare issues involved in the election, such as:

- Great awareness and discernment for the Lord's praying people as they pray over the election.
- Physical protection for all candidates and their families throughout this campaign season.
- A strong hedge of protection around the nation itself during this time of decision.
- The unleashing of the sword of the Spirit throughout the nation, judging the thoughts and intents of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

## 7. The Purposes of God

Ultimately, whatever the area of prayer emphasis, we must always come back to the purposes of God. Jesus taught us to pray, "Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10). As we pray for something as important as national elections, we must lay down our own desires and take up the desires of God. What we really desire is for the Lord's purposes to be achieved in and through our nation. All of our requests must be couched in words and thoughts that focus our hearts on the Kingdom of God. Pray today for the purposes of God to be accomplished in the U.S. elections:

- Pray that the U.S. will turn and seek first the Kingdom of God.
- Pray that God will be honored in the midst of this election campaign.
- Pray for opportunities for Christians to share their faith and their values in the midst of this election process.
- Pray that the results of the 2012 elections will please the Lord and release His blessing over this nation.

<http://40daysofprayer.net/resources/prayer-guide>

By David Butts, chairman of America's National Prayer Committee and founder/president of Harvest Prayer Ministries. © 2011 Harvest Prayer Ministries, Prayer Connect magazine.

JOIN IN 40 DAYS OF PRAYER FOR AMERICA **9/28/12**







## What Is the Day of Prayer for the Peace of Jerusalem?



October 7, 2012

**and Every First Sunday of Every October of Every Year the EPC/LEPC joins hands around the world to Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.**

On the **first Sunday of every October**, hundreds of millions of people around the world join together to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. In just a few years, this event has quickly become the **largest Israel-focused prayer event in history**. But why set aside this day each year to pray for Jerusalem?

### Purpose

We set aside this one day each year to **raise global awareness and intercession** for God's purposes in Israel, knowing that this hour in history is critical and our authority in prayer is great. Though we can pray every day for Israel, we seek on this day to **unite with believers** around the world in **raising a cry to Heaven** on behalf of this troubled, but strategic land and its people. We believe in God's promises for His beloved nation and fervently pray to hasten the day when He brings fulfillment to His word.

### History

**Begun in 2002 in meetings with leading political and religious leaders from Israel and the United States**, this is now the largest prayer movement of its kind, with over 1,200 key leaders within the Evangelical Christian world lending their active support.

### Vision

Our vision is for sustained, fervent, and informed global intercession for the plans and purposes of God for Jerusalem and all her people. The **goal of Day of Prayer, by God's grace, is that by this coming October there will be at least 175 participating nations and 300 million believers praying for the peace of Jerusalem.**

### Resources

<http://www.daytopray.com/Resources/ministryresources>

## What It Means To

*Pray for the Peace of Jerusalem.* Psalm 122*by Bishop Nancy Drew*

In the days of King David three times a year during three major festivals set in place by the Lord Himself, God called His people to Jerusalem to pray, to come up to the "House of the Lord." During this time as the populous of Israel converged on the ancient city they sang the Songs of Ascent from Psalms 120-134. It was a joyful celebratory time as God's people from all over Israel poured into Jerusalem. They came to experience the city that God called His own making it the focal point of Israel and to worship reverently in the holiness of God's Presence. It was in this setting that Psalm 122 was written.

For us today the word "peace" means the absence of war, tribulation, disturbance but at the time of the writing of Psalm 122 there was a great deal more indicated in the use of the word "Shalom." Shalom deals with harmony, wholeness, oneness, agreement and all of this as God's gift. It does include protection as part of wholeness but that is not all. Verse 6b also states that those who pray for Jerusalem will receive God's gift of blessing, wholeness and harmony. They will share in Jerusalem's blessing. While external harmony is desirable in verses 7 and 8 the Psalmist is dealing with internal harmony without which external harmony is not possible.

Two reasons are given in verses 8 and 9 to pray for Jerusalem. For my brethren and companions sake I will now say "peace be within thee"- complete wholeness. Second, because of the Lord's house as the proper place of worship, "Because of the House of the Lord our God, I will seek your good."



**Western prayer wall in Jerusalem, the retaining wall for the original Temple.**

after him who would be like "the sands," "I will bless those who bless thee and curse those who curse thee" because they were God's chosen for His purposes. This is not a blanket approval of all that Israel or the Jewish people might do but it is coming in agreement with God about what is important to Him and aiding in the fulfilling of His desire. So it is appropriate to pray for all Jewish people, for Israel and for Jerusalem. Jesus Himself said when He wept over Jerusalem: "...If thou hadst known...in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hidden from thine eyes" ([Luke 19:42](#)). Pray that all of Israel might see.

Pray for the nations of the world where so many Jewish people were scattered. Pray for these areas of the world as well that Jerusalem might have Shalom. There is no Temple now, yet, in Jerusalem but as Christians we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We ought to pray for the well-being of Christians and nations where they live and Jews who know Messiah. I Tim. 2:1-2

# When the Fire Bell Rings, Will You Answer?

Rev. Dr. Thomas Peavy

Some weeks back I had an opportunity to attend Emergency Fire Department Training at the State Fire Academy in Jackson, Mississippi. The days spent there were eventful and reminded me of years long ago when I was a firefighter lieutenant in central Georgia. The time has passed, technology has changed the work, however, the culture of the Fire Service remains much as it has been for many years. A difference now is that many departments, municipal and volunteer have Chaplains who are a part of their department activity. The events of September eleventh years ago brought to the public's attention that firefighting is a job with considerable danger and trauma as a part of the fireman's experience. The Chaplain is in a unique position to help his/her Firemen in their time of need and to bring God's presence to situations many of us will only know in our most difficult hour.

A history of the fire service shows that the first firefighting force was created in Rome during the reign of Cesar Augustus. These were referred to as "vigils" and are recognized today as the first firefighting force. In the United States, Boston, Massachusetts established the first fire department in 1679. From that time until now other municipalities and counties have established fire departments to meet the protection need of their citizens. Men and later women have come to the fire service to perform duties many would find difficult to do. The fire service is a brotherhood and fire departments help one another. These men and women may be paid career firefighters or volunteers. No matter their status they face similar dangers and experience traumas we only read of or hear about in the news. Their training is rigorous and ongoing and a necessary part of remaining ready to answer the next call. They have a language and code of conduct that is of their culture and the outsider must earn entry into the circle.

The Chaplain who is a firefighter has experience with the fire service and will find it less of an issue gaining acceptance with firefighters. Those who are not firefighters will need significant preparation and training to expect to be a Fire Department Chaplain. Having God's call is important, however, the "harvest field" of the fire service requires one who genuinely fits into the roles of the service and appreciates the culture and its unique place as a service organization in our society.



The Chaplain role may vary from department to department. Some Chaplains may wear uniforms while others may not. The Fire Department Chief determines the attire. The Chaplain generally serves as a staff person in an organization or group to which they minister and not as an organizational leader. Given this they are subject to the supervision of others.

Emergency services chaplains are generally afforded additional opportunities beyond their ministry to responders and may have impact on citizens affected by crisis. Chaplains should be prepared to minister to citizens affected by emergencies within the community. Responding to vehicle crashes, fires, and emergency rooms are a part of the emergency service chaplain's duties. Chaplains may see their emergency service ministry as an extension of themselves. They want to offer their presence and spend time with emergency service personnel and on the scene with emergency personnel.

My question to the reader is "what would you be able to do when called upon to minister in an emergency?" Would you know where to park, where to go, where to report, what to wear, or whether you should be present? These are questions one

may well consider prior to responding to a crisis situation.

Prior to pursuing ministry in the emergency services it may be wise to take extended time to pray and ask the Lord for His direction. God's timing and direction are foundational to success. If married assure your spouse is in agreement in taking this step, honestly evaluate your motivation and assess your time, emotional and spiritual energy needed for this calling. God's work in the field of emergency and crisis response is in need of those who are called to this ministry. Consider His calling to you and if His direction is to this area of service seek training and prepare to perform His work.

I would like to thank Chaplain Robby Jernigan of the Assemblies of God Seminary in Springfield, MO for material related to this article and for his training of Emergency Fire Department Chaplains.

Rev. Dr. Thomas Peavy  
Board Certified Crisis Chaplain

# What's New!



Welcome  
New Members!

from left to right are:  
James Woodworth; Mary Jane Woodworth; Michael Hedding;  
Sherrie Hedding; Betty Hall; Kelly Hall; Bishop Linda Dabney,  
Pastor.

Holy Spirit Lutheran Church  
Arkansas  
870-431-8521/870-421-5516

Look!

Find us on Facebook at  
<http://www.facebook.com/epclepc.generalconference>



# The “Back Page”

## The Mark of the Beast *Revelation 13:16-17*

*Pastor Steve Bacon*

As the elections draw near I am amazed at the number of my Christian friends sending me emails begging me to not vote for that “Muslim Anti-Christ” Obama and to vote for Romney.

I am amazed that my “Christian” friends warn me about an unproven “Muslim or Anti Christ” yet urge me to vote for a proven Cult follower, which a Mormon is.

While Mormon’s would have you believe that they are Christians they are not.

I am neither Democrat or Republican and there has not been a candidate in the last 30 years that I had any faith in.



Steve & Teddy 9/28/1951

The only one I have faith in is Jesus Christ. All others are merely men or women and they can do nothing for my salvation,

Instead of “Christian” leaders telling us to beware, the Anti Christ is here, they should be telling the only unified story of the Gospel.

God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever would believe in him would not perish but have eternal life!

Scaring the population with the Anti Christ is only playing into the devils hand.

Martin Luther was sure the Pope of his day was the Anti Christ, Hitler was surely the Anti Christ, Saddam Hussen, Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton Barack Obama and the list goes on and on.

I greatly disagree with many of the Democratic Party planks, I also disagree with many of the Republican Party planks. Since neither candidate is speaking about issues it is a moot point anyway.

I really don’t care how you vote or who you vote for.

What I do care is whether you have Jesus in your life and whether you are saved.

As a Christian I am not ashamed of the Gospel, but I am ashamed of how many “Christians” are behaving.

Our job is to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, no more, no less.

The moral decline of this country is not dependent on any one man or woman.

The salvation of this country is dependent on ONLY one, Jesus Christ. Preach that and leave the rest to God.

# From the Editor

Thanks for all of your contributions. Remember, for this magazine to be a success you must be the reporters. I will try and put it together in the best light and we will all praise God in the process.

May the blessings of Christ be with you all.

*Pastor Steve*



Is he done yet?

Blessings,

*Pastor Steve*

Evangelical Protestant Church(GCEPC)®,Inc,

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