

Bugenhagen came from Pomerania (Baltic coast, now in Germany and Poland) to Wittenberg in April 1521 to study under Luther. As it turned out, Luther left for Worms in early April, so that Bugenhagen would not get to know Luther until he returned from his refuge at the Wartburg in March 1522. Meanwhile, the student Bugenhagen became a teacher, because later in 1521 he began to deliver lectures on the Bible and gained the attention of Philip Melanchthon. He became a regular lecturer at the University of Wittenberg.

Soon Bugenhagen served the Reformation in a new capacity. In his absence, Luther's coworker and theology professor Andreas Karlstadt became radicalized, as we shall hear later. Turmoil followed. At his urging the city school was closed in 1522 and other radical changes were made in the city congregation. Bugenhagen responded to these efforts to coopt the Reformation in Wittenberg with a calm demeanor and firm conviction. He encouraged students to stay in school, and he continued teaching. His role in this crisis brought him into the inner circles of the Wittenberg Reformation.

In 1523 the pastor of St. Mary's, the city church of Wittenberg, died. The city council and members of the congregation elected Bugenhagen to fill the vacancy as their pastor. It was a momentous call as pastor for at least three reasons. First, Bugenhagen became Luther's own pastor, confessor, and coworker. He provided rich spiritual care for the rest of Luther's life. Second, Bugenhagen labored extensively in promoting and organizing the Lutheran Reformation in various places in Europe, especially helping shape the worship and parish life of the Lutheran church. Third, his call by the members of the congregation set a precedent that is enjoyed by our own Lutheran congregations to this day. We take it for granted that congregations call their own pastor; Bugenhagen was the first to receive such a call among Lutheran congregations.

We often think of Luther's marriage and household as the model of the Lutheran parsonage. Certainly he has become such an example in many ways. But honors for establishing the first Lutheran parsonage belongs to Pastor Johannes Bugenhagen. On October 13, 1522, he followed Luther's praise of marriage by getting married. When he was called as pastor of St. Mary's, he also occupied a house adjacent to both St. Mary's church and the Old Latin School (established by his successor, Paul Eber, in 1564), still standing today. The restoration of marriage to Lutheran pastors is a rich treasure in our Lutheran churches today.

FUTURE DATES

February 5-6: Tell the Good News About Jesus Convocation
February 19-21: Youth Breakaway Weekend, St. Andrew's
March 12-13: Powder River Winter Youth Retreat, Buffalo
May 6-8: Wyoming District Convention, Casper
June 17-19: Family Retreat, Uinta County
June 25-27: Fathers and Sons, Fort Robinson
July 20-22: Homeschool Conference, Casper Mountain

THE NEXT ROUNDUP

The next Roundup will be delivered to congregations around February 20 (March 2021 issue).



Wyoming District Round-Up **February 2021**

District Website: www.wylcms.org

“Here I Stand” on the Word in My Community

“...REMEMBERING YOU IN MY PRAYERS...” (Eph. 1:16)

For **Rev. Vernon Boehlke** (emeritus, Riverton), as he continues treatments for cancer.

For **Rev. Ralph Jaeger** (emeritus, Laramie), health
For pastors and members of Wyoming District congregations that are recovering from COVID.

For **Jennifer Wittrock** (wife of emeritus Rev. Michael Wittrock), diagnosed with cancer.

For **Rev. George Naylor** (Mount Calvary, Bayard and St. James, Scottsbluff) as he recovers from COVID at home.

PASTORS AND CONGREGATIONS

St. Paul's, Sidney is being served by **Rev. Allen Strawn (St. Paul's, Bridgeport)** during the vacancy. The congregation is holding discussions with Salem, Gurley and St. Paul's, Potter (Rev. Ted Bourret) about forming a multi-point parish.

Rev. Travis Sherman (Grace, Gordon) is serving **Grace, Merri-man, NE** (Nebraska District) while it considers its future.

St. John's, Lovell issued a divine call to **Rev. Jacob Benson** (Zion, Orange, Connecticut) on January 10. He has accepted the call and will be installed on March 14.

Trinity, Riverton (Rev. Mark Mumme) is considering options for the school, including calling an assistant pastor/head teacher.

Immanuel, Alliance (Rev. Richard Mueller) met January 24 and called **Rev. Shaun Daugherty** as assistant pastor.

Here I Stand: God's Word in My Community

Here I stand on God's Word in my community! But what is the relationship between my congregation and my community? What is the relationship between Church and State? As we confess God's gift of Government and the Civil estate, we also uphold the distinct nature and mandate of

Government in relation to the Church. “The power of the keys or of the bishops is used and exercised only by teaching and preaching God’s Word and by administering the sacraments. . . . Not bodily but eternal things and benefits are given in this way, such as eternal righteousness, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life” (AC XXVIII.8).

The Civil Estate, on the other hand, is concerned with worldly matters that involve natural law, reason, legal justice, earthly peace, and the needs of this body and life. “*Worldly rule* deals with matters altogether different from the gospel. *Worldly* power does not protect the soul but, using the sword and physical penalties, it protects the body and goods against external violence” (AC XXVIII.11).

This distinction is essential for the wellbeing of both Church and State. The Church should not assume the powers of the state by setting up or deposing government officials, dictating laws, or acting as judge. The State should not attempt to dictate to the Church what is sound doctrine, right worship, the pastoral office, church membership and participation, and the like. This distinction must be maintained with great diligence.

But we must not allow this bright and sharp distinction to separate the Church from the world or render it invisible—a “platonic republic” (Ap VII/VIII.20). In fact, these two Estates intersect in the daily lives of Christians. Both Estates are concerned with moral truth and behavior, with the body, with marriage and family, with man’s spirit, and yes, even with the true religion. “The gospel does not overthrow secular government, public order, and marriage but instead intends that a person keep all this as a true order of God and demonstrate in these estates Christian love and true good works according to each person’s calling” (AC XVI.5). God commands the Church to pray for “devout and faithful rulers, good government” with all the worldly goods that are included in the 4th Petition. God commands Government to provide the conditions in which Christians—the Church—may “live a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way” (1 Timothy 2:2). In fact, such a virtuous government has a direct relation to the Church, as Paul explains, “This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:3–4). God teaches that just and peaceful government is His designed condition for the saving Gospel to flourish.

Church and State are sharply distinct, but both are ruled by the same God and according to the same eternal law. Both Church and State operate in the same world and work on the same things. Both deal with men. Both are located on earth in our communities. Church and State speak to each other and interact. Practically speaking, every Christian belongs not only to the Church,

but also to his Civil Community as a citizen. Nor does the government govern only non-Christians and leave Christians to the rule of the Church. The State and the Church both work on the same communities and the same people, though in very different ways.

It is essential to emphasize that both Estates exist in the same fabric of reality. In both Church and State, truth is paramount and must govern all laws, all organization, all communications, and all actions. Truth stands unchanged in both. There isn’t a special church truth or spiritual truth on the one side, and a different state truth or civil truth on the other. There isn’t a special creation truth in the Bible and a different evolution truth in science or law. Language doesn’t work one way in the Bible and a different way in law or science or history. Honesty is still honesty, whether in the Church or in the Government. And so on.

And so issues of moral behavior remain the same in both Church and State. The eternal law of God must be taught and obeyed in both Estates. Sin in the Church realm is sin in the Civil realm. The sin that could lead to excommunication in the Church is also an evil in the community and subject to Civil law. The Christian can’t say that in church he is opposed to abortion, but in the state he supports and enables it. It is a lie. Such a position rejects God as the eternal source of all truth. Abortion is evil and a sin for both Church and State. Male and female, marriage, chastity, and the blessing of children are all truths that hold in both Church and State. The Christian is always a Christian, whether in Home or Church or Civil realm. He must always believe and think and act as a Christian.

The distinction between Church and State must be maintained for the good of both. But we dare not separate them into different worlds. God will do that in His own time when Christ comes in glory and destroy the kingdoms of the world and takes His beloved Church to be His Bride in heaven. In the meantime, we Christians live in the intersection of the Church and Civil estates, where we bear fruit richly in both for the good of our neighbor and the glory of God.

REFORMATION 500: The Burning of the Bull

While Luther was caught up in the charges of the papal bull and stood before the Empire at Worms in April 1521, a man arrived in Wittenberg who would come to be one of Luther’s closest coworkers and his own pastor and father-confessor. Johannes Bugenhagen read Luther’s *Babylonian Captivity of the Church* and thought him the wickedest heretic, but upon a more thorough examination, recognized that Luther was teaching the truth in the midst of the blindness and darkness of the papacy. He became a follower of the Lutheran Reformation.