

WYOMING DISTRICT ROUND-UP

Wyoming District—LCMS

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SPRING 2021



"Here I Stand" on God's Word in My Community

Persecution, Confession, and Peace

We were taught to pray in the old hymnal: "O Lord, favorably receive the prayers of Thy Church, that, being delivered from adversity and error, it may serve Thee in safety and freedom; and grant us Thy peace in our time; through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord. Amen." (TLH p. 103, #13)

Safety, freedom, and peace: We have experienced these blessings in abundance in our country for many, many years. We have prayed for our country and the freedom to exercise our faith in full, so that "Your Word may not be bound, but have free course" in our churches, households, and communities. A just and well-ordered government is a divine gift, and we are taught to pray for it "that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way" (1 Timothy 2:1–2).

In other words, the freedom that our Biblically faithful Lutheran churches have, to teach God's doctrine and live according to it, is the best setting for us to preach and teach God's Word, administer the sacraments, support marriage and pious Christian families, care for the poor and sick, evangelize our neighbors and communities, bring up our children with a zealous faith and pious virtues, and so on. We should use this civil freedom and safety while they last and promote and defend them for the sake of the Church. God has given these gifts to our civil communities for the teaching of the Gospel and for the wellbeing and growth of His Church.

*"O Lord, favorably receive
the prayers of Thy Church,
that, being delivered from
adversity and error, it may
serve Thee in safety and
freedom; and grant us
Thy peace in our time.*

TLH p. 103, #13

But we are now being reminded that this freedom is an anomaly, an abnormal state of affairs in a hostile world. The persecution of pure Christian doctrine and practice—faithful Christians and faithful Churches—is the norm throughout history. Tribulation often comes to Christians generally, even those who do not keep God's beautiful doctrine in purity. But it comes especially for those who hold and confess the right and pure doctrine. For example, the world will not show its hatred to unfaithful churches that support all the various perversions of marriage while rejecting the truth that man is created by God as either male or female. Only faithful churches will earn that hatred and scorn. Many more examples of opposition to various articles of doctrine can be found throughout the history of the Church. A whole list of opposed teachings appears in the history of the Lutheran Reformation!

But persecution and tribulation are also gifts of God. Tribulations certainly help purify the Church, as they lead Christians to understand more clearly the call to pure doctrine and faithful life. Afflictions build endurance, character, and hope in us (Romans 5:1–5). Persecution also creates new opportunities for confession of the Christian faith. The church can thrive under persecution, even without safety, freedom, and peace.

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Persecution is a time of opportunity for us Christians and for our churches. The Holy Spirit teaches us that when we are persecuted for our public confession and life of faith, people will ask us questions about our faith. They will see that we have a hope that is greater than all the empty or passing hopes and dreams of this world. As a result, we will be given opportunity to answer and confess. “But even if you should suffer for righteousness’ sake, you will be blessed. Have no fear of them, nor be troubled, but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect” (1 Peter 3:14–15).

Peter adds one more thing: “having a good conscience, so that, when you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ may be put to shame” (1 Peter 3:16). We began this meditation with the prayer that God the Father would “grant us Thy peace in our time.” God’s peace does not exclude peace between nations and peace between neighbors in the world. We do pray for such peace. But God’s peace runs much deeper. “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them” (2 Corinthians 5:19). God’s peace is peace with Him, His peace in our hearts. It is His peace that gives us boldness before God and before the world, “Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:22–25).

The peace won by Christ’s atoning death and justifying resurrection is “the peace of God that surpasses all understanding” (Philippians 4:7). This is the peace which Jesus promised to us: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid” (John 14:27). This is the peace that Jesus gives us even in affliction and persecution: “I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33). This is the peace of sins forgiven, of the sinner’s justification in Jesus’ blood, of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. So the risen Lord greets His Church, “Peace be with you” (John 20:19).

O God, from whom come all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works, give to us, Your servants, that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be set to obey Your commandments and also that we, being defended from the fear of our enemies, may live in peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen. (LSB p. 233)

Continuing Education for Pastors of the District will be coming up soon!



WHEN: Monday, May 31 through Friday, June 4

WHERE: [Fort Robinson State Park \(Map\)](#)

COST: Class: \$225 | Lodging: \$250 (\$62.50 /night)

CLASS TITLE: To the Point of Shedding Blood: Christian Martyrs in the First Three Centuries

PRESENTER: Dr. Adam Koontz

CLASS DESCRIPTION: Jesus resisted evil to the point of shedding His blood, and many, many Christians have followed His example to this day. Not every religion or set of ideas requires the disciple to die. Why did Jesus’ earliest followers do this, under what circumstances, and how did they preach the Gospel as they gave their bodies over to death? We will look at the New Testament and early Christian literature to understand the earliest Christian martyrs.

This class is for both those who would like to attend alone and those who would like to bring their families. Fort Robinson has many activities to offer our families. For more information about the park, visit the link above. Register for lodging at wylcms.org/fortrob2021/ and be sure to register for the course through CTS’s website by going [here](#). Contact Pr. Mark Mumme or Pr. James Rockhill for more information.



Here I Stand before Kings and Princes (Psalm 119:46)

We are in full preparation mode for the Wyoming District Convention. Convention will be held on Thursday, May 6, 2021– Saturday, May 8, 2021 at the Ramkota Hotel in Casper, WY.

During the convention, there will be a slideshow in celebration of 50 years as the Wyoming District– LCMS. If you have any pictures or historical knowledge of the district that you would like to share, please email Tiffany at the District Office (thoff@wylcms.org).

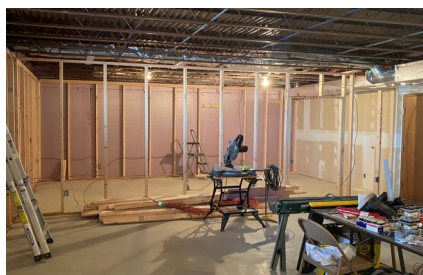
The Convention Workbook will be published no later than **March 26, 2021**. This will be published on the District website for you to print at your convenience or use electronically.

The Wyoming District—LCMS Pastors' Wives Retreat will be held June 10-12 at the C'mon Inn in Casper. Rev. Jonathan Lange will be our speaker. The topic covered will be on God's Gifts of Marriage, Life, and Family. Registration forms will be mailed after Easter. If you have any questions, contact Leah Wierschke.



From the District Office:

Our days at the office are generally pretty quiet, but the new construction zone in our basement has changed that a bit and we are so excited to share what has been happening with you all. In January, we obtained a building permit to begin the expansion of the basement. We are expanding the bathroom to add a shower, have framed in a kitchenette/sleeping area, and the remaining space will be used for meetings or conferences when needed. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to the following people for volunteering their time and hands in getting this project started: Anna Hahn, Bob Doctor, Marty Finch, Matt Huckfeldt, Pastor Rockhill, Pastor Strawn, and Pastor Olson. Shown are a few pictures of the progress that has been made toward the completion of this project. We invite anyone that would like to see the expansion to join us for an open house May 6th from 6:00-6:45pm and 8:45-9:15pm. While the project may not be complete at that point, you will be able to see the progress that has been made.





REFORMATION 500: Luther at Worms

Luther's confession before the Holy Roman Empire in April 1521 was the formal introduction of Lutheran doctrine, that is, Scriptural Doctrine, to the world. The confession that was made by one man standing before Emperor Charles V would be repeated by the representatives of Lutheran Churches nine years later at the Diet of Augsburg, giving us the Augsburg Confession and the birth of the Lutheran Church.

Luther had been summoned to the Diet of Worms (pronounced Vorms) at the end of March. The Diet was the parliamentary assembly of the Empire, over which the Emperor presided. Luther left Wittenberg on about April 2 and took two weeks to travel over 300 miles from Wittenberg to Worms riding in a covered wagon.

He entered Worms on April 16, welcomed by a crowd of supporters. The next morning, Luther heard confession from an ailing knight and celebrated communion with him. The formal summons came to appear at the diet at four o'clock that afternoon. There was to be no debate; he was only to answer questions addressed to him. When the time came, he was brought into the crowded hall wearing his monastic clothing.

Luther was to answer two questions: Were the books—piled on the table in the hall—his books? And would he retract, or recant, anything in them? He replied first in German, then in Latin. With a quick examination of the books in question, Luther willingly acknowledged the books as his own. In reply to the second question, however, he asked to be given a day to consider and prepare a faithful answer. He had been prepared to answer for specific teachings, but not to give a total confession or total rejection of all his books. Luther knew that the salvation of his soul, the wellbeing of the Church, and the Word of God were at stake. He knew that he also stood before the Final Judge of all men. He asked for time.

The Emperor granted him one day and dismissed him, though with a warning to "keep in mind the unity of the holy, catholic, and apostolic church and the general peace and quiet of the Christian commonwealth" (124).

Luther's determination to make a good confession is seen in a letter he wrote later that evening: "With Christ's help, however, I shall not in all eternity recant the least particle" (AE 48.200).

It was about six o'clock the next evening when Luther was again brought before the Diet, this time in a larger hall to accommodate an even larger crowd. The court official placed the question before Luther again, reprimanding him for not being prepared to answer the previous day. But Luther had prepared himself to answer the second question, again answering in German and Latin. His initial response was thorough and carefully considered.

He divided his writings into three groups. The first group were books in which he taught Christian faith and piety so simply and evangelically that even the opponents recognized them as good and useful. He could not recant or retract such sound teaching.

The second group were writings against the papacy and its false teachings, which were destroying souls, tormenting consciences, and torturing the church with cruel tyranny. He could not retract these writings, lest he confirm and strengthen such evils.

The third group of writings were against individual persons who had either defended the Roman church's tyranny or attacked the doctrine Luther was teaching. Here Luther conceded that he had at times written more sharply than was appropriate for his call as a teacher of theology. Nevertheless, he could not retract these writings either, because the teachings were not his but Christ's. But if someone would refute him from Holy Scriptures, he was prepared to recant any error immediately. He concluded,

To see excitement and dissension arise because of the Word of God is to me clearly the most joyful aspect of all in these matters. For this is the way, the opportunity, and the result of the Word of God, just as He [Christ] said, 'I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, etc.' [Matt. 10:34-35]. Therefore, we ought to think how marvelous and terrible is our God in his counsels, lest by chance what is attempted for settling strife grows rather into an intolerable deluge of evils, if we begin by condemning the Word of God. (AE 32.111)

It was hot in the hall, so that Luther was now perspiring heavily. Nevertheless, he insisted on repeating his lengthy speech in Latin. The official who was questioning
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Welcome New Pastors

Rev. Jacob Benson was installed at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lovell, WY on March 14. Pastor Benson was born and raised in Worland, WY. He was baptized and confirmed at St. Luke's and, after some spiritual wandering, he made his



way back to orthodox Lutheranism at St. Andrew's Campus Center while attending the University of Wyoming. After graduating with a degree in Religious Studies and Psychology, Jacob was accepted to CTS in Fort Wayne, IN. While at CTS, he developed a passion for inner city missions and outreach to those that society has overlooked. He has served churches as a Vicar in Baltimore, MD, Philadelphia, PA, and as a Pastor in Orange, CT. While Pastor Benson has become accustomed to "east coast living," he never forgot his Wyoming roots, and found every opportunity he could to spend time outdoors with his wife Mary and their pitbull rescue, Daphne. Pastor Benson was called to St. John's in Lovell in January

of 2021. The same day he accepted the call, he and Mary found out they were expecting their first child (a gift long prayed for). Pastor and his growing family are excited to be back in Wyoming near mountains and family and look forward to the rich blessings that await them at St. John's.

Pictured above are: (front row from left) Rev. Shawn Kumm, Rev. Jacob Benson, Rev. Jared Korb. (backrow from left): Rev. Jais Tinglund, Rev. Mark Mumme, President John Hill, and Rev. Samuel Needham.

Rev. Shaun Daugherty is happy to be returning to his family roots in Western Nebraska, where he is serving as Associate Pastor at Immanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church and School in Alliance, NE. As a child, he spent a lot of time visiting family in Hemingford, NE — just 20 miles down the road from Alliance. His previous calls were in Carrollton, TX; Shenzhen, China; and New York City.

Pastor Daugherty was married to his wife, Beth, in 2004. They have been blessed with four boys; Jonas (11), Silas (9), Zachary (6), and Amos (3).

Pastor Daugherty enjoys being outdoors and joyfully takes on yard work, gardening, and various other outdoor projects in the warm months. He also enjoys trying to learn new skills and make things. For instance, last fall he built a treehouse for his boys and learned a whole lot in the process. He and Beth enjoy traveling, hiking, and going on "adventures" with their family. When it's cold out (or they just need a "lazy" day), the family enjoys staying home and playing board games, watching movies, reading books, and working on cub scout badges/projects.



Pastor Daugherty's installation was held on February 28. Shown above are: (front row from left) Rev. Scott Firminhac, Rev. Richard Mueller, Rev. Shaun Daugherty, Rev. George Naylor, and Rev. Allan Wierschke. (back row from left): Rev. Kenneth Humphrey, Rev. Richard Neugebauer, President John Hill, and Rev. James Rockhill.

(Continued from page 4)

Luther rebuked him for giving this complex answer and for using the defense given by all heretics. He then demanded that Luther directly give a simple, honest, and straightforward answer, without “horns,” that is, without clever reservations. Would he, or would he not, recant his books and the errors in them. Luther’s answer speaks for all of us:

Since then your serene majesty and lordships seek a simple answer, I will give it in this manner, neither horned nor toothed: Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Scriptures or by a clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted, and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not retract anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. I cannot do otherwise; here I stand, may God help me. Amen. (AE 32.112f)

There were many articles of doctrine at stake in Luther’s books, and therefore also in this confession of faith. He was not permitted to address them all before the Emperor on that day. But the confession he gave stated clearly that the Holy Scriptures alone are the source and authority for all Christian doctrine and life. He made clear that his conscience and his reason were subject to God’s Word, and that he could neither deny what Scriptures teach nor teach anything against them. He was prepared to be persecuted, imprisoned, or die for the sake of this confession.

After the close of the Diet, Luther was declared to be an obstinate heretic. For the next nine years the status of “Lutheran” churches was ambiguous. They were neither accepted by the Roman Catholic Church, nor yet a constituted, confessional Church in their own right. But Luther’s faithfulness at the Diet of Worms demonstrated to all that Lutherans were committed to Biblical doctrine, doctrine that is believed, taught, and confessed by Christian and Church alike. That commitment continues to this day among us.

THE NEXT ROUNDUP

The next Roundup will be delivered to congregations around April 20 (May 2021 issue).

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

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, Merriman, NE** (Nebraska District) while it considers its future.

Future Dates

May 6-8: Wyoming District Convention, Casper

May 31-June 4: Pastors Continuing Education, Fort Robinson

June 10-12: Pastors Wives Retreat

June 17-19: Family Retreat, Uinta County

June 25-27: Fathers and Sons, Fort Robinson

July 20-22: Homeschool Conference, Casper Mountain

August 8-12: Wyoming Lutheran Youth Camp, Lander

Information regarding the events listed above are found in this edition of the Roundup.



SAVE THE DATES! The following events will take place this summer:

- The Big Horn Invitational Speech Meet will be held May 14 at Martin Lutheran Grammar School in Sheridan, WY. The invitation was sent to the pastors and congregations on March 26.
- The Headwaters Family Retreat will be held on June 17-19. Information regarding the retreat was sent to congregations and can be found on the district website at www.wylcms.org/familyretreat.
- The Father Son Retreat will be held June 25-26 at Fort Robinson State Park in Crawford, Nebraska. Registration and information will be forthcoming and will be posted on the district website and sent to congregations when it becomes available.
- The Homeschool Conference will be held July 20-22 at the Lion's Camp on Casper Mountain. Registration will be made available on the District website.
- Wyoming Youth Lutheran Camp (formerly known as Lander Camp) will be held August 8-12 at the Fremont County Youth Camp in Lander, WY. Registration packets were sent out to congregations on March 26. You may also find registration materials at www.wylcms.org/wylc2021

“Running with the Curriculum”

A module for Classical Lutheran teachers and administrators

Join Rev. Joel Brondos as he leads us in looking deeper into the foundations of Lutheran Classical Curricula including its history, evaluation, creation, and collaboration. With years of experience as a Lutheran classical teacher and headmaster, Rev. Brondos brings practical wisdom, knowledge, and resources for all those who work within our schools. Be prepared to not only *talk* about curricula but also to collaborate with other Lutheran classical teachers and administrators from far and near.

Hosting Congregation: Immanuel Lutheran Church, Sheridan, WY

Date: June 18th, 2021

This event will be held live, in person, with the option for Zoom attendance available. Cost & Registration coming soon. For more information, please contact Rev. Rene Castillero (revrenecastillero@gmail.com or 307-752-7957)