

✠ TODAY AT GRACE ✠

Organist: Janelle Hein Elder: Frank Radichel
Ushers: Pat Paplow, Alex Baker, Kevin Baker, Dan Degnan,
 Brian Eichstadt, Brandon Paplow
Counting Team 2: Gary Gunther; Rick Nelson; Bill Rust; Bob
 Vandever, Clint Welker
Hospitality Team 2: Brian & Maureen Eichstadt; Janelle
 Hein; Jenny Kleifgen; Chris Lentz
Church Cleaners: Oman School: Wales

✠ NEXT WEEK AT GRACE ✠

Ushers: Pat Paplow, Alex Baker, Kevin Baker, Dan Degnan,
 Brian Eichstadt, Brandon Paplow
Counting Team 3: Don Auel; Brian Eichstadt; Benno
 Sydow; Chad Hestekin
Hospitality Team 3: Larry Nelson; Barb Sydow; Nick &
 Miranda Duehlmeier; Dan & Cindy Degnan
Church Cleaners: Oman School: A. Baker

✠ OUR SCHEDULE ✠

Sun., Jan. 17: 9:00 am – Sunday School and Bible Class
 10:00 am – Worship Service
 11:15 am – Hospitality
 11:30 am – Voters and Dorcas Guild Meetings

Mon., Jan. 18: NO SCHOOL

Wed., Jan. 20: 4:30 pm – Catechism for Public School Students
 7:00 pm – Midweek Bible Class

Sat., Jan. 23: 9:00 am – Grace Work Day

Sun., Jan. 24: 8:30 am – Choir Practice
 9:00 am – Sunday School and Bible Class
 10:00 am – Worship Service
 11:15 am – Hospitality

Sun., Jan. 30: 2:30-6:00 pm – Evangelism Seminar @ Eau Claire, WI

Wed., Feb. 10: 6:00 pm – Lenten Soup Suppers Begin
 7:00 pm – Midweek Lenten Worship Services Begin

Mar. 17-19: CLC Grade School Basketball Tourney @ Eau Claire

Last Week's Stats: Jan. 10, 2016 Sun.: 98 S.S.: 9 B.Cl.: 39 Wed.: 24			
Sun. Offering:	Grace:	\$3,809.80	CLC: \$1,009.00
Weekly Need:	Grace:	3,300.00	CLC: 1,000.00*
-Under / +Over:	Grace:	+509.80	CLC: +9.00
Year-to-Date Offering:.	Grace:	\$5,793.55	CLC: \$1,539.00
Year-to-Date Need:	Grace:	6,600.00	CLC: 2,000.00
Year-to-Date (+/-)	Grace:	-806.45	CLC: -461.00
GLC Other:	25.00	Living Faith:	0.00
SAF Endowment:	0.00	MDF:	245.00
ILC Student Aid:	0.00	ILC Bldg.	100.00
		Tuition Aid:	230.00
		Kinship:	50.00
		IIF: 0.00	CEF: 0.00
Current Balances:	Parking Lot:	10,716.00	Tuition Aid: 2,852.12

*Based on the Council-proposed 2016 Figure. Voters have yet to determine 2016 amount.



Grace Lutheran Church & School

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 Fridley, MN 55432
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 Home Page: www.JustifiedByGrace.org
 Member: CHURCH OF THE LUTHERAN CONFESSION



Pastor: John Hein (Cell 612-408-1635) **Phone:** 763-784-8784
School Phone: 763-784-6340 **Grades:** Kindergarten-8th
Church Year: Epiphany 2 **Date:** January 17, 2016

✠ WORSHIP INFORMATION ✠

<p>Hymns: WS 718: O Jesus, King of Glory CDS Children: The Star Proclaims the King is Here TLH 73: Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates TLH 341: Crown Him with Many Crowns TLH 657: Beautiful Savior Listening assistance is available. Please ask an usher.</p>	<p>Worship Prep: Psalm 24, TLH p. 128 Liturgy: TLH, p. 5 (Projected) Gloria: WS 775, st. 6 Scripture Reading: Isaiah 62:1-5 John 2:1-11</p>
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Sermon: Psalm 24:1-10
¹The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness, The world and those who dwell therein. ²For He has founded it upon the seas, And established it upon the waters. ³Who may ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who may stand in His holy place? ⁴He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to an idol, Nor sworn deceitfully. ⁵He shall receive blessing from the Lord, And righteousness from the God of his salvation. ⁶This is Jacob, the generation of those who seek Him, Who seek Your face. Selah ⁷Lift up your heads, O you gates! And be lifted up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. ⁸Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle. ⁹Lift up your heads, O you gates! Lift up, you everlasting doors! And the King of glory shall come in. ¹⁰Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah (NKJV™)

CREATION'S GLORIOUS EPIPHANY
 PART TWO: CONFIRMS CHRIST AS OUR KING

CREATION AND THE APPEARANCE OF AGE

By David N. Menton, Ph.D.

I am often asked if I really believe that God created everything in six, literal, 24-hour days -- And I freely confess that I do find it difficult to believe such a thing. Why, I wonder, would God spend an entire six days doing a miracle that would require of Him literally no time at all? Think about it... How much time does a miracle take? How much time, for example, did Jesus take for His first miracle when He changed water into the finest quality wine (as judged by a professional steward) for the wedding at Cana? The answer, of course, is no time at all -- He told the servants to fill the pots with water and serve it! Still, the Bible clearly reveals God took six whole days to initially create everything to perfection; so, we must either take God at His Word, or presume to stand in judgment of all Scripture.

Some Christians seem to have just the opposite problem with six day creation -- they find it difficult to believe that God could get the job done in only six ordinary days. They prefer to believe that the days of Creation were vastly longer than 24 hours -- even over a billion years longer! (Perhaps they are confusing miracles with time-consuming work or luck.)

Still other Christians do not seem to doubt that God could have created everything in six ordinary days, yet insist that He didn't because the universe just looks older than that. They point out that expert cosmologists have concluded that the universe gives every appearance of being at least 12 billion years old, and that the earth appears to be about 4.5 billion years old. Similarly, an expert viticulturist would have concluded that the superb wine Jesus provided for the wedding at Cana was at least a few years old and made from grapes, not mere water. In both cases, the experts might be right about the appearance of age, but wrong about the actual age of created things. Is God then trying to fool us, or perhaps testing our faith by making things appear older than they really are?

The appearance of age in the things which God created is a much-debated issue in contemporary Christian scientific circles. Can God -- or more accurately -- would God create something which at the very moment of its creation has the appearance of age? The short answer to this question may be: How Else? How, indeed, could God create anything that did not appear to us to be aged (like a fine wine) at the moment of its creation.

Think of any one thing that our omnipotent God might instantly create out of nothing by the power of His Word. Let's say you thought of a simple stone. If the stone is round, this would appear to show the effects of years of tumbling and wear. On the other hand, if it is sharply angular in shape it would appear to be a broken fragment of a larger, previously-existing rock. Regardless of their shapes, rocks are hardened composites of previously existing materials such as molten magma and sedimentary silt. Even if you thought of silt itself, it must have come from the natural weathering and pulverization of previously existing rock. Or perhaps you thought of a simple hair -- depending on its length, it might appear to be the product of several years of hair growth from a previously existing hair

follicle. Maybe you thought of a visible star -- depending on its distance from the earth, its light might appear to have been traveling for over a billion years to reach your eyes. All of these things would have the appearance of age and an ongoing process at the very moment of their creation.

Nowhere is the appearance of age and pre-existing process more interesting than in the sudden creation of the first human being. The Bible tells us that Adam was completely formed (presumably as an adult) before there was ever a woman on the earth. At the very moment of his creation, Adam would surely have appeared to us to be the product of a long growth and development process. Certainly in our experience today, a postpuberal human is a result of no less than 12-14 years of growth from the time of birth. The newborn baby, in turn, is typically the result of 8-9 months of development and maturation, starting with a fertilized egg in the womb of a previously existing mother. And of course, fertilization requires a father. The sperm cells of the father aren't even produced until he reaches the age of puberty. Also let's not forget the critically important placenta -- its development in the womb necessarily precedes that of the baby so that it can serve the function of a temporary lung, kidney, liver, gut and endocrine system until the baby develops its own. It's no wonder that for centuries artists have been at a loss to portray just what the first couple's abdominal region looked like -- did they, or did they not have a belly button? (You will note that artists generally avoided the whole issue by conveniently covering their mid-sections with nearby foliage.)

This whole line of thinking gets us into what is called a "first cause" problem. We live in a "cause and effect" world, where every action causes a reaction and is itself the result of a previous action. Everything appears to be an ongoing process for which we are incapable of really grasping a beginning. This is all popularly expressed in the age old question: "What came first, the chicken or the egg?" If we say the chicken we will be asked from whence the chicken came; yet if we say the egg, we will be asked from whence the egg -- and so round and round we go. Somewhere, there had to be a beginning to this cyclical process we call the chicken and the egg. The Bible tells us that God created every bird out of nothing on the fifth day of the creation week, and that they have been reproducing after their kind ever since. (Genesis 1:20-23)

Of course, none of this will satisfy the crass materialists who will demand to know where God came from and will scream foul if you tell them that God is eternal. Now if you ask the materialists how the chicken came to be, they will relate the following scenario: The chicken evolved by chance from other earlier and more primitive birds, which in turn evolved by chance from reptiles, which evolved from amphibians, which evolved from fish, which evolved from invertebrates, which evolved from single-cell organisms, which evolved from non-living chemicals, which evolved from hydrogen gas, which evolved from the "Big Bang," which evolved from the "cosmic egg." If you ask the materialists where the material of the cosmic egg came from, they will tell you it's eternal!

We may conclude that the Lord is captive to neither time nor process. The Psalmist says of God: "For a thousand years in Your sight are like yesterday when it is past." (Psalms 90:4) How much time after all does a yesterday take?

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✠ THE ANNOUNCEMENTS ✠

- ◆ **Voters and Dorcas Guild:** Today is the annual Voters meeting. We ask our Voters to stay and participate. All men 18-years and older are eligible to serve as Voters. The Dorcas Guild will also meet.
- ◆ **Directory:** Please check your contact information in the draft copy of the directory located in the narthex. Place a check mark by your entry if it is correct. If it is not, then please edit as necessary. Also, please ensure your birthday and/or anniversary information is correct.
- ◆ **ILC Tour Choir CD's:** Copies remain of the new recording of choral music sung by ILC Tour Choir. Cost is \$16 for a 2-CD set. Those interested may speak with Pastor.
- ◆ **Devotion Book for Women:** Blair Sydow, member of our church in West Columbia, SC, and daughter of former Grace member, Trudy Wales, has an interest in putting together a devotion book written for women of the CLC by women of the CLC. She is gauging interest from others with a questionnaire at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9wtctvz>
- ◆ **Evangelism Workshop:** All are invited to participate in this year's workshop on Sun., Jan. 31, 2:30-6:00 pm at Messiah in Eau Claire. The theme this year is "How You Ought to Answer Each One." This is based on Colossians 4:6, "Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one." Questions come your way when people know you are a practicing Christian. Will you know what to say? This workshop will leave you better equipped to serve the Lord, who first served you, by being His witness. Our format will feature presentations, as well as break-out sessions for discussion and application. A soup and chili fellowship supper will follow. Come and learn – Come and share!
- ◆ **CLC Mission Visitation to Nepal:** The chairman of the Board of Missions will be leaving on Monday (1/18) afternoon for a 2½ week visitation to Nepal. While in Nepal he will be visiting villages where congregations of the Himalayan Church of the Lutheran Confession of Nepal (HCLCN) suffered severely from the devastating earthquake this past April. He will also be on hand for the graduation and ordination of seven HCLCN pastors, the dedication and opening of the new Himalayan Bible Institute, and he will also have the privilege of officiating the wedding of Raju and Sanju on January 31. You can follow the trip blog at: <http://2016clcnepalvisitation.blogspot.com/>
- ◆ **CLC News:** Rev. Timothy Daub, member of Gethsemane Lutheran in Spokane Valley, WA, has applied for colloquy. Formerly he was in the LC-MS and WELS. ✠ Pastor John M. Johannes of Mt. Olive Lutheran of Detroit Lakes, MN, and St. Paul's Lutheran of Ponsford, MN, has received the call to Mt. Zion Lutheran in Madison Heights, MI (Detroit area).

Welcome to our guests and visitors. We appreciate the opportunity to share God's Word with you today. Please come again! Those interested in learning more about the Scriptures and our doctrinal position, please speak with Pastor Hein. He would be delighted to visit with you!

THE LORD IS IN CHARGE – A Reason to be Bold!

Frequently in the midst of trials, afflictions, illness, threats, and similar circumstances we hear. "Don't worry about it; the Lord is in charge." Absolutely! We believe that. "Cast your burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain you; He shall never permit the righteous to be moved" (Psalm 55:22). Abram was told by the Lord, "Do not be afraid ... I am your shield and your exceeding great reward" (Genesis 15:1). In his last epistle the apostle Paul wrote, "And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom ..." (2 Timothy 4:18). For the reason expressed in these passages and many others, Christians need not worry. "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31) The question begs a positive response. Our God who has claimed us as His own by the merit of the Lord Jesus Christ will guard and keep us. Therefore, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass" (Psalm 37:5), "... and be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God" (Philippians 4:6).

The Lord knows our yesterdays, our todays, and our tomorrows. He is not unaware of anything or any circumstance in our life. As our dear Father He loves us in Christ through whom He has redeemed us to be His own. "... Your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask him" (Matthew 6:8).

We live under these promises in our life as Christians in a world that hates both Him and His faithful children. As relates to His Word and matters of faith, He has told us that in the last days—the New Testament era—hatred and persecution shall increase. We are not to expect any different treatment than that which was dealt to our Lord.

The Church will face dire circumstances in the last days. But Jesus has told us, "These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). Furthermore, the message of Revelation is that the ultimate victory belongs to the Church. So in the long term there is nothing to fret about; nothing to worry about. The open confession of Christianity may as in times past be driven underground. But God's Word shall endure, and God's people shall triumph! No need to worry, for the Lord is in charge. We believe that.

Two thoughts: First of all, as God is in charge there is no reason to worry. Nevertheless, because of our sinful flesh there is a daily tug-o-war between the old man and the new man within us. Daily we will pray on one hand that the Lord forgive us our lack of trust. On the other hand we pray that He will strengthen us to trust in Him with all our heart, all our soul, and all our mind.

The second thought is the subtle suggestion that since our Lord is in charge and victorious, we should not be so vehement about what is happening in

the church and in the world, because “The Lord will work it out. Just have faith.” We respond that the promises of God and our confidence in the Lord do not excuse us from being concerned about, speaking out, and contending against the evil in the world. We are not to hide complacently or with a *laissez-faire* attitude behind the confident faith that God our Father is good and gracious.

When we get sick, it is not a lack of confidence in the Lord to go to the doctor. Not to use the gifts that He has placed on the earth as His instruments may in fact be tempting God. Because He has promised to provide for us does not mean that we sit at the table, knife and fork in hand, and expect the food to drop out of the sky onto our plates.

Our *contending* for the faith, and *witnessing* to the Truth as it is in Christ Jesus, *begins with prayer*. “Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know” (Jeremiah 33:3).

Because the Lord has promised that His Word will endure and overcome all foes, does not mean that we can, in a confessional sense, simply observe what is happening in the church and in the heathen world (e.g. the Muslim ascendancy) and say, “The Lord will see to it.” He will, but as He works through means, He calls and fits us to be instruments (e.g., Martin Luther) to the accomplishment of His purpose. David met Goliath in the name of the Lord (1 Samuel 17). Nevertheless, David hurled a rock!

Christianity is under the gun in a general sense. Confessional Christianity is under the gun in a specific sense. Of immediate interest to confessional Lutherans is the reality that Reformation Lutheranism is beset with enemies of the truth from within, perhaps not like any other time since the adoption of the *Formula of Concord* sorted out the genuine Lutherans from those who weren't.

In the Old Testament the people of God were to be engaged in “fighting” for the Lord and in the defense of the faith. The Lord had promised Israel that they would enter Canaan. He also told them, “For I will deliver the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you” (Exodus 23:31). Through Joshua He told the people to “put away the foreign gods which are among you” (Joshua 24:23). The Lord also said to Israel, ““And you shall make no covenant with the inhabitants of this land; you shall tear down their altars’. But you have not obeyed my voice” (Judges 2:2). They paid the price of disobedience. Our call is to tear down the false altars, not with sword, but through faithful and unrelenting witness to the Word of God!

The Lord is in charge and will bring victory, if not here, in eternity for His body, the Holy Christian Church. But He has charged New Testament believers to be engaged. We are to be watchful in all things. We are instructed to preach the Word. The context is to the point. “Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all long suffering and teaching. For the time will come when they

will not endure sound doctrine ...” (2 Timothy 4:2-3). We are to expose false teaching—anything contrary to the Word and will of God—and avoid it. We are to contend for the faith (Jude 3). Though the Lord has promised eternal inheritance to each believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, Satan has us in his sights. Therefore, “Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown” (Revelation 3:11). Again, “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Revelation 2:10).

We live in the post-Christian age. Christians (Christ-believers) will not disappear from the earth, but the influence of Christianity is waning. Heathenism, paganism, secularism, and nihilism (the rejection of all religious and moral principles) are intent to bury Christianity, or at the very least make life uncomfortable for the confessing Christian.

The cause is the Lord's. He will not lose what He has already won. He will not renege on His promises to His children. We know the Lord is in charge, and He will see the Church through to ultimate victory. But confident faith in the Lord does not justify complacency on our part. Because the victorious Lord is in charge and the victory is assured, confessors should be emboldened to stand for the truth, and defend it in the face of the bitter attacks and consequences that may follow. We can draw strength from the example of the witnesses that have gone before us. Paul wrote to the Philippians: “... and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear” (Philippians 1:14).

As it is written: “‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.’ Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:31-39).

We believe it! By faith embrace the victory that is yours in Christ Jesus. Pray for the faith of the apostles to say boldly, “Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard” (Acts 4:19-20). When our call to enter into our rest comes from the Lord in due time, may we say with Paul, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who love His appearing” (2 Timothy 4:7-8).

Written by Rev. Daniel Fleischer, 11/2015